Vietnam: Defeat U.S. Imperialism

A Progressive Labor Party Pamphlet

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Introduction

This pamphlet explains the history of the Vietnam war and gives a program for fighting against it. It's written by the

Progressive Labor Party, a revolutionary communist party. PLP has been organizing to get the U.S. out of Vietnam since our party was formed. We know most working people and students oppose the war and want the U.S. out. But there are still disagreements, and these disagreements make a big difference in the way people fight against the war -- in fact in the way people fight any injustice. This pamphlet is addressed to people who oppose the war but who don't look at it the way we do.

For example-some people oppose the war but at the same time accept part of the government's story. They don't think the U.S. has rotten goals in Vietnam. They're against the war because: "there's no point; it just drags on and on. Vietnam isn't worth one American boy's Life." These people accept some or all of the following pro-government argument:

"The U.S. wants to do in Vietnam what it's trying to do everywhere: prop up free regimes. A free regime in Saigon asked the U.S. to help roll back a northern communist invasion. The north Vietnamese reds want to enslave south Vietnamese peasants and force them to work the rich southern lands;

The U.S. gave its sacred word, promised to help; The only problem is --these Orientals are so damn apathetic. What do they care about freedom? They think with their bellies and they're ready to follow any con-man who waves a cup full of rice. Anyway they've always died like flies."

We think this pro-government argument is 100 per cent wrong.

A second group of people agree that this pro-government argument is a lie. But as opposed to us, they think the war is a mistake. "Right wing generals have gotten us into this mess," they believe. They think Nixon is a vicious fool or a tool of crazed rightists, or maybe both. They once looked to RFK or McCarthy. Now they hope Fulbright and McGovern can "beat the hawks" and "bring peace to a war-torn world."

The first view, which accepts the government story but is against the endless killing, leads to taking very little action. The second view, that the war is a right-wing monstrosity, leads to backing liberal "doves." Our view -- that the war is a war to protect and expand big business profits, that it's a class war by the rich against working people in Vietnam (and in the U.S.!) -- leads to linking 'the anti-war fight to the class struggle of U.S. workers. It leads to a movement to fight all the big-business politicians, liberal and conservative alike.

In this pamphlet we will show:

1) The U. S. government itself installed the Saigon regime which then "begged for U.S. help." The government's "we made a promise" claim is

2) The U.S. government's attempt to suppress Vietnamese workers and peasants started the war. There never was any northern invasion. And anyway, the point is - who is right and who is wrong?

3) Attacked by the U.S., most Vietnamese workers and peasants fought back. They're not "apathetic sheep who think with their stomachs." These working people have carried out one of the longest, most heroic revolutionary struggles in history. The "mindless-Asians-they-always-died-like-flies" image -- which the U.S. government pushes -- is racist filth intended to build contempt for the Vietnamese heroes. The government spread this filth to suck U.S. working people -- soldiers for instance -- into hating the Vietnamese.

4) Reds have fought hard and played a leading part in the struggle. This is to their credit since the fight is just. It's very unfortunate that wrong ideas have led most of the Vietnamese revolutionary leaders -- including many (who call themselves communists -- to betray this great struggle now.

5) U.S. foreign policy has nothing to do with "protecting freedom." It is aimed at holding onto sources of cheap labor, raw materials, investment and market opportunities - and providing new sources - for vast U.S. corporations, It's a rich man's policy, the way it's always been, just the same as the U.S. government protects the rich and suppresses working people in this country. All workers should back Vietnamese working people: an injury to one is an injury to all.

8) Vietnam is no mistake no "rightist aberration." It's just one page in a rotten book. It was liberal "dove" politicians, not nasty "hawks" who mainly worked out U.S. Vietnam strategy in the first place -- John F. Kennedy for instance. "Doves" and "hawks" talk different, but talk is cheap. In practice, their disagreement is over how they can best beep working people down and smash communism. They agree that brute font and polite negotiations (including working with sellouts who pose as reds) are both useful tactics. The question is when to use the carrot and when to use the stick. Thus "hawk" Nixon is all for U.S./Soviet cooperation against revolution. And after all, it was "hawk" LBJ who started negotiations in 1968.

There's no big disagreement in the "dove-hawk" imperialist family. The real disagreement is between all these rich-men's politicians and revolutionary communists. **They** say that only the rich can rule. We **reds** say: overthrow these leeches, this rule of billionaires. The working class must have all power!

Note: Throughout the pamphlet we refer to NLF and DRV leaders. NLF stands for National Liberation Front, what the U.S. government calls the "Viet Cong". It was formed in 1960. DRV stands for Democratic Republic of Vietnam, what the U.S. calls "North Vietnam." The DRV was formed as a result of the supposedly temporary division of Vietnam into northern and southern sections in 1954, following the Geneva Conference.

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French Imperialism in Vietnam

Most Vietnamese are poor peasants. A few landlords used to own most of the land. They took over half the peasants' crop for rent.

For over a century the landlords, joined later by big businessmen and other local parasites, have worked. as junior partners with a series of imperialist powers -- first France, then Japan, and now the U.S. -- getting "a piece of the action" from the exploitation of most Vietnamese.

Since it started before World War II, Vietnamese peasants' and' workers' fight against these oppressors has grown into a great war of millions of working people. It has inspired billions more around the world. Right now, this people's war has been set back, not mainly from outside but from within. It's been set back by leaders who claim to be reds but are really after a sellout deal with imperialism

But that's getting a little ahead of the story.

As we said, first the French took over Vietnam. The French never were able to "pacify" Vietnam. Revolts occurred all through the period of French rule -- from the mid-19th century to 1954

During the 1920's and'30's opposition grew. Economic exploitation was crushing the people. French capitalists -- big businessmen -- set up huge rice and rubber plantations. They gave even more land to local landlords, recruiting colonial "civil servants" from these "mandarins."

THE RISE OF THE VIETMINH

When France fell in 1940, Japan Indochina. Vast quantities of rice were seized by the Japanese, so that about 2 million died of starvation during World War II..

Vietnamese workers and peasants fought back -- as always. The Vietminh was formed, led by Communist Party. By the time the war ended, most of the country was controlled by Vietminh forces. On September 2, 1945, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was proclaimed.

The French (and the U.S.) didn't want to lose "their" colony. Backed by British and U.S.-controlled Kuomintang (anti-communist Chinese) forces, French troops returned to Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh, the Vietminh leader and. until his recent death, president of North Vietnam, agreed to a cease fire with the French. The French used this deal as a cover to build up troops. In November, the French navy bombed the port of Haiphong, thus starting the French/Indochinese war. It ended eight years later in a French defeat.

THE U.S. HELPS THE FRENCH

Under both Truman and Eisenhower, the U.S. backed the French. Starting in 1947, vast amounts of Marshall Plan aid went to France for use in the war. .In. 1949, after the Chinese people beat the U.S.-backed Kuomintang, the aid increased. And in 1950, with the outbreak of the Korean war, the U.S. government further expanded its aid and set up a military mission id Vietnam. By 1954, the U.S. was paying about 80 per cent of French war costs.

This was a time when the government was moving hard to destroy the much-weakened Left in the U.S., especially among workers. Overseas, the U.S. government had adopted the key strategy of encircling and defeating revolutionary communism in China.

But hundreds of thousands of French troops, armed and supplied through vast U.S. aid, couldn't beat the Vietnamese people. The French were isolated in their outposts and hostile cities. Desperate to disguise the colonial nature of the war, the French "officially" granted their dedicated puppet emperor Bao Dai independence ... several times!

In defence of the U.S. one might argue that perhaps the government thought France was popular in Vietnam. But ex-President Eisenhower made clear how wrong that would be:

"The enemy had much popular sympathy, and many civilians -aided them by providing both shelter and information. … guerrilla warfare work two ways; normally only one side can enjoy reliable citizen help...the French could not win the war because the internal political situation in Vietnam. … badly weakened their military position.

(Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change*, p. 373)

In other words, the U.S. knew very well that France was a hated colonial tyrant in Vietnam. It supported France based on its strategy of stopping revolution in Asia, especially China.

IMPERIALIST STRATEGY, 1958

In mid-March, 1954, the French. government told Washington the Vietminh was winning the Indochina war. This had been brought home sharply by the defeat of the massive French fort at Dienbienphu. The French rulers could me so further gain in fighting for the U.S. They wanted out. Thus, early in the spring of '54 the French agreed to a Geneva Conference to discuss how they could get out of Vietnam.

But as the conference began, the U.S. government had a different view. For it, "keeping Vietnam" was a must. As Secretary of State John Foster explained in a basic policy statement: The "imposition" of communism in southeast Asia "by whatever means" would not be allowed (*N.Y.Times*, 3/30/54)

The class of powerful businessmen and bankers who own this. country and run the U.S. government all agreed: Vietnam had to be "held."

There were of course certain disagreements among government officials. In 1954, lust as today, there were "doves" as well as "hawks" among the rulers. But none ever suggested that the U.S. allow the "imposition" of communism. All agreed that Vietnam had to be "held" -- the only question was how to do the job.

Nixon, a "hawk" politician in '54, reasoned that:

If the French withdraw, Indochina would come Communist-dominated within a month... It is hoped that the United States will not have to send troops there but if this government cannot avoid it, the Administration must face up to the situation and dispatch forces. (*N.Y. Times*, 4/17/54)

The Vietminh had overwhelming support and would surely take power once France withdrew; "holding" Vietnam would require many U.S. troops -- that was Nixon's argument.

Where did the "dove" politicians stand? They did not disagree with 'Nixon's goal of stopping the reds. Nor did they think he overestimated Vietminh popularity. Thus, JFK admitted:

It should be apparent that the popularity...of Ho Chi Minh...throughout Indochina would cause a coalition government to result in eventual domination by the Communists. (John F. Kennedy, speech in the Senate, 4/6/54)

Kennedy and other "dove" politicians thought Nixon mistaken only on the question of sending many U.S. troops right away. Instead, argued the liberals, the U.S. should take a more farsighted approach. The government should work for a deal at the Geneva Conference. France could withdraw and the Vietminh could regroup in the northern part of the country. The U.S. would then hold onto the southern part, install a puppet dictator, send did to prop up this puppet government as a strong counter-revolutionary force to 'cut back Vietminh influence -- and if things went wrong, "whenever necessary" there could always be "some commitment of our man-power." Kennedy and-the "dove" politicians thus proposed hiding behind a puppet dictator -- a more subtle method than an immediate, large-scale invasion,

In ;1954,as today, "dove" and "hawk" politicians had disagreements -- over the tactics for defeating revolution. However they agreed on the absolute necessity of keeping working people down. Both groups were trying to serve the billionaires' class interests. They came out with much bombast about democracy and about protecting what Kennedy called "the values and institutions which are held dear in France and throughout the noncommunist world as well as in the U.S." What they really wanted was to make the world safe for big -U.S. banks and corporations.

As things turned out, the "dove" politicians' tactics -- not Nixon's -- became the basis for U.S. strategy in '54. Thus U.S. puppet Ngo Dinh Diem was installed to run South Vietnam. The "doves", not "right wing generals," started the U,S. war!

THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS

So U.S. government aims at Geneva were clear:

to use that conference to reverse the terrible political situation -- terrible from the billionaires' viewpoint, that is As it turned out, the dove plan pushed by John F. Kennedy was the best way to achieve those aims. By installing a pro-U.S. puppet regime in southern Vietnam, the U.S. officials hoped to make southern Vietnam once again safe for U.S. business interests and eventually transform all of Vietnam into a stable base for the U.S. businessman's-government.

As it turned out, the official terms worked out at Geneva weren't perfect from the U.S. point of view. One thing' they didn't like was that Vietnam was split. into two parts -- north anti south -- only temporarily. They wanted that split to be recognized as permanent so. that the puppet regime they'd set up in the south would be officially recognized. But according to the terms of the agreement nationwide elections were supposed to reunite Vietnam in 1956. It was clear to U.S. officials who would win. those elections -- the Vietminh had overwhelming political support all over Vietnam. They'd win hands down. And the agreement said that no reprisals were to be taken any more by either-side. How could the U.S. smash the revolutionary movement in the south without taking reprisals?

Here's Eisenhower's comment in his Memoirs:

The, agreement did contain features...that we did not like, **but a great deal would depend on how these features**

worked out in practice. (*Mandate for Change*, p. 371; our emphasis.)

So that was the real question -- what would happen in practice? Secretary of State John Foster Dulles made U.S. plans in regard to this clear shortly after the conference ended:

One of the good aspects of the Geneva Conference is that it advanced the truly independent status of southern Vietnam. (*N.Y. Times*, 7/24/54.)

What could this mean? As we have seen, official terms agreed to at Geneva did not recognize southern Vietnam as an independent state -- the division of north and south was supposed to end in '56. The only official reason given at Geneva for this temporary division was that it would let the French withdraw peacefully while all Vietminh troops temporarily regrouped in the northern part of the country. So what was Dulles talking about? The answer is, he was talking "between the lines." His statement makes plenty of imperialist sense if you read it this way: "One of the good aspects of

the Geneva Conference is that it sent all the Vietminh troops to the northern section of Vietnam. This will allow us to advance into southern Vietnam, install and arm a puppet dictator and then declare that southern Vietnam is an independent state." Thus, the U. S. rulers were proceeding with John F Kennedy's plan -- full speed ahead!

So the actual details adopted at Geneva were never so important. What counted was that the Vietminh was withdrawing troops to the north for two years. This gave the U.S. rulers what they needed to carry out Kennedy's plan -- it gave them two years to install a puppet. With this puppet providing the "native cover," the U.S. could wreak havoc on southern Vietnamese working people, smash up their revolutionary organizations -- organizations which-were now stripped of protection by Vietminh troops.

This was a terrible setback for Vietnamese working people. It gained them nothing. It cost them dearly.

But, one might argue, what else could they do? If they'd refused to talk turkey, the U.S. would have just sent in half a million troops, just like in 1966.

Quite true, we'd answer -- but that would have been a lot better! Why do we say this? Consider. What would have happened if the Vietnamese had refused to come to Geneva? First, France would have pulled out anyway. Second, the U.S. could not have adopted Kennedy's plan -- for it rested on Vietminh troops withdrawing to the north. So Nixon's plan would have had to be used. Half a million troops would have been sent to Vietnam. But until the Vietminh troops withdrew to the north, after Geneva, all of Vietnam, north and south, was one vast Vietminh revolutionary base. An invasion of Vietnam would have bogged down the U.S. government in a vast, relentless war against millions of working people --the same thing that happened when the U.S. invaded in 1965. And this was right after Korea. U.S. working people were pretty damned fed up with "police actions," so class struggle would have sharpened within the U.S. -- just like after the 1965 U.S. invasion. It all adds up: the Vietnamese would have been in a terrific position while the U.S. government would have been overextended and backed into a deadly political corner. What a gain for all working people. But, instead, the Vietminh leaders agreed to withdraw their troops to the north. Thus, at the Geneva conference table they lost half the country and allowed the U.S. to move in and smash revolutionary forces in the south at will.

How could they have done this? This terrible reversal was only possible because of serious political weaknesses on the part of the Vietnamese leaders. These wrong ideas -- really the ideas of the very enemy they were fighting -- proved more deadly than all the U. S. paid-for bullets that French legionnaires had fired for 10 years! What were these

ideas?

First, there was **NATIONALISM**. The Vietminh leaders viewed the struggle very much in terms of independence for "their own" country. This meant they did not take into account the effect -- on the class struggle in the U.S. and all over -- of continuing the fight. They were not mainly trying to further the world-wide liberation of all working people, they were mainly trying to get at least part of Vietnam freed of foreign control. Not only did nationalism blind them to their duty to the world wide working class, it also blinded them to the support they could get if they kept on fighting. For that increase in, that tremendous strengthening of, class struggle around the world would have, in turn, helped them. A vast movement could have and surely ;would have developed demanding the U.S. be driven out of Vietnam at once. Instead, they saw things in terms of the "sacred Vietnamese nation."

Secondly, and very much related to this, the political outlook of these leaders included many reformist-liberal ideas where there should have been revolutionary-communist ideas. For after all, the whole point of the negotiations was to "get on good terms" with the U.S. government. "If we are nice to the imperialists," was their reasoning, "they'll be nice to us." By being "reasonable" and "coming to the bargaining table," Vietnamese leaders hoped they'd get -a "fair shake" from the U,S. government. Thus they constantly spoke about the 1956 elections deal. But why would the U.S. government, having been given two years to entrench a pro-U.S. regime, let it all go by the board peacefully in 1956? Where had any ruling class ever allowed itself t be thrown out peacefully? This was not merely an "abstract" error either. For by pushing this elections agreement, the Vietminh leaders were saying: Don't worry about the troops going north, we'll win peacefully in two years. They were telling Vietnamese and all other working people that imperialism could be trusted, that revolutionary armed force was unnecessary. There were setting whoever listened to them up for the kill -- and plenty listened, including the movement in southern Vietnam. People's War, class struggle guided by complete internationalist support by all working people for each other -- this kind of revolutionary movement is the only way any working people can smash imperialism. What a terrible example the Vietnamese leaders provided for revolutionary forces around the world

A particularly striking aspect of this political weakness was the "dove"-"hawk" aspect. That is, the Vietminh leaders were trying the 1954 peace talks gambit to play Kennedy-types off against Nixon-types. They hoped that if they came to the butcher's table and talked turkey, the nicer "doves" would gain the upper hand in the U.S. But the Nixon-Kennedy controversy was not antagonistic. Nixon's plan for sending-in U.S. troops was a) very risky but b) necessary if the Vietminh refused to talk. Kennedy's plan was a) much harder to beat (since it meant hiding behind a puppet dictator with -a Vietnamese cover) but b) only possible if the Vietminh agreed to leave the south in U.S. hands.

Thus the real meaning of "strengthening the doves' hand" was that Vietminh leaders gave U.S. imperialism a chance to employ **the better of 2 tactics**. No Nixon-type invasion took place because none was needed. The only force the U.S. needed was the force it employed to try to break the neck of the revolutionary organizations in the south.

In other words, the Vietminh leaders agreed to hand the southern Vietnamese working people over to U.S. imperialism on a silver platter. If we don't do this (was their argument) the U.S. might invade and if the U.S. invades we might lose half the country !

So Vietnamese leaders relied on nationalism and lost half the country. They relied on liberal U.S. "dove" politicians and got Ngo Dinh Diem, the U.S.'s puppet butcher, And together, the U.S. government and their pet snake Diem subjected Vietnamese working people to many years of vicious exploitation and oppression before People's War reasserted itself fully in the '60's.

And now, despite all the terrible lessons of 1954, the same leadership is betraying the hard-rebuilt struggle of the

working people in the same way. The scenario is similar. Fulbright and McGovern are calling for a "coalition government" including the NLF. At this point this corresponds politically -- in the ;current situation -- with "dove" Kennedy's stand in 1954. It would mean a terrible retreat for the NLF- and give U.S. imperialism a new lease on life. And the DRV/NLF leaders are backing the new "dove" politician line....But more on this later. Let's return to 1954

VIETMINH STRENGTH IN THE SOUTH

Some U.S. apologists have argued that, at the time of Geneva, the Vietminh was really quite weak in the south. Thus, they claim, the U.S. takeover represented only a formalization of political reality. Consider the report of the virulent anticommunist, Joseph Alsop, who traveled through Vietminh-controlled areas in the south just after Geneva:

It; was difficult for me...to conceive of a Communist government genuinely 'serving the people.' I could hardly imagine a communist government that was also a popular government and almost a democratic government. But this was just the. sort of government the palm-hut state actually was.... By the time Dienbienphu fell, very nearly half of southern Indochina was under the control of the Vietminh. (*The New Yorker Magazine*, June 25, 1955.)

Alsop understates. In Vietminh-liberated areas all over the south there had been a social revolution. The landlords had been overthrown. But the U.S.-created Diem regime gave the landlords one more chance.

The U.S. war against Vietnam, which started in !54, can be divided into four stages.

1) From '54-'60, the U.S. tried to create an anticommunist government under Ngo Dinh Diem.

2) From'60-'65, the U.S. used "special war" to fight the growing Vietnamese revolt with "native forces."

3) From '65-'68, the U.S. invaded the south and bombed the north.

4) From '68 to the present, negotiations took the "people" out of People's War in Vietnam.

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1954 to 1960 - U.S. Rulers Bet on Diem

The U.S. wanted an anti-red regime in the south to expand counter-revolutionary activities throughout Asia and encircle China. But the U.S. needed someone to head up this regime. Here's how they chose Ngo Dinh Diem:

Secretary of State Dulles picked him, Senator Mike Mansfield endorsed him, Francis Cardinal Spellman praised him, Vice President Nixon liked him, and President Eisenhower OK'd him. (*Look*, January 28, 1965.)(Note; *Look* has left out John F. Kennedy and William O. Douglass, both key backers.)

As Look admits, Diem was chosen by the U.S. government, not by Vietnamese working people. He was not the "father of his country." **He was the willing servant of his boss - U.S. imperialism**.

(And what is left of the U. S. government claim that it intervened at the request of Diem? What does it mean to honor a "call for help" from a regime you've installed yourself? What a shallow, hypocritical cover for an imperialist attempt to reverse a popular, anti-imperialist revolution.)

BUILDING SUPPORT THROUGH BRIBERY AND FRAUD

To get the army to support their puppet, the U.S. government started sending aid directly to Diem right after Geneva. At the same time, $12 million in bribes was distributed to leaders of the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao religious sects. This became an established pattern -- bribes for the army and selected civilians. Thus from '55-'60, 3/4 of the $2 billion in aid to Diem went for the army. The small amount that paid for the "commodity imports" program was intended to get support from the middle class, the only ones who could afford to buy anything.

But the U.S. government didn't just bribe support into existence. It also tried to trick it into existence. About 900,000 northern refugees moved south between '54 and '55. The U.S. government claims these people "voted with their feet" against the reds. Actually, the government is lying:

The mass flight was admittedly the result of an extremely intensive...American psychological leaflets appealed to the devout Catholics with such. themes as "Christ has gone to the south" and "the Virgin Mary has departed from the north." (Bernard Fall, *The Two Vietnams*, pp. 153-154.)

Thus about 85 percent of the refugees were Catholic. Entire parishes were led south by priests. The rest were mainly families of civil servants and; soldiers who'd backed the French. The U.S. government spent nearly $100,000,000 on this trick(Fall, *ibid*.)

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY VERSUS THE PEOPLE

To strengthen Diem's army, the MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group) was expanded. MAAG built the Saigon army up to 150,000 and established a local militia of 40,000. Besides this, a 50,000 man Civil Guard was trained. But this wasn't done by MAAG, it was done by MSUG.

MSUG, the Michigan State University Group, played a key role in building Diem's puppet government. It consisted of some professors, experts in police training and administration, and some C.I.A. agents. MSUG trained Diem's palace guard, his secret police, and a Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation. It systematized the keeping of dossiers, and

taught other security techniques.

Helping counter-revolution is the key job U.S. colleges. Sometimes this takes the -blatant form of the MSUG, sometimes the more quiet form of war and social-control research, or the everyday form of teaching anti-communism and racism in courses. Students have been -- and should be -- fighting this. An example is the many militant fights to drive ROTC off campuses across the

country.

During 1954-1955,the U.S. government created a vast repressive force in Vietnam, complete with a huge army, police, "FBI" and a civilian bureaucracy. Using this arsenal, the U.S. government's Diem regime attacked the people.

COUNTER-REVOLUTION 1N THE COUNTRYSIDE

Early in 1956, the *New York Times* said:

Government must be extended to tee villages where all too often ... Communism obtains. And the time is short. Geneva fixed July, 1956, the date for all-Vietnam elections. These really will never be held ... the non-communist south cannot afford the slightest risk of defeat. (*New York Times*, our emphasis, 3/ 12/56.)

Early in 1956, the Government must be

In other words, the U.S. had to smash the Vietminh's influence right away or when -- as had already been decided -- they announced there'd be no elections, the Vietnamese people would rise up and smash Diem.

The Vietminh armies had regrouped to the north, as decided in the Geneva Agreements. But there were millions of Vietminh supporters in the south.

In mid-'55, Diem launched the first "Anti-Communist Denunciation Campaign" -- an attempt at mass terror. All Vietnamese who'd opposed the French were subject to bloody persecution. By '56 about 50,000 were in jails and concentration camps. Law 10/59, passed in 1959, went further -- travelling military courts complete with guillotines, were sent out; they could sentence anyone to death as a threat to the "security of the state."

This wasn't a matter of terror directed at individuals alone. It was a class terror, directed against Vietnamese working people, especially peasants In the south the Vietminh had carried

out much land reform. Hundreds of thousands of peasant families were free of vicious, gouging landlords. They controlled their own villages. Vietminh support was rooted in this social revolution. So, to destroy this support the U.S. government tried to break the back of the revolution.

U.S./Diem began a program to reimpose landlord rule on the peasants. To implement this program required the terror discussed before.

The key to this program was the so-called land reform. Drawn up by the U.S. "experts" Wolf Ladejinsky and Price Gittinger, the reform was unusual**. It took land from peasants and gave it to landlords!**

Officially, the plan allowed landlords up to 250 acres and let them charge up to 25 percent of the peasants' crop. Thus, for the millions of peasants who'd gotten land during the Vietminh-led revolution, this meant return of landlords, return of high rent and brutal landlord rule. And, in practice, it was even worse. The 26 percent rent ceiling was taken as a minimum by the U.S.-imposed landlords. Pre-revolutionary rates of 50-60 percent were soon common. And, to top it off, the landlords often demanded back rent for the period during which the peasants had kept them away.

These anti-peasant measures were, once again, no blunder. U.S. officials not only knew what was happening **-- they planned it that way!** These measures were carefully calculated. For they knew -that most Vietnamese were pro-Vietminh**. Only the classes who'd backed the French were really "reliable."** The U.S. had to resurrect the local rule of the French lackeys if it was going to begin to create an anti-revolutionary base in the south.

First the U.S. claimed to be bringing democracy to Vietnam. And now -- this land reform.

Who were they trying: to kid?

Throughout 1955, Diem refused to discuss the '56 elections with DRV officials. Instead, in October, he staged what was probably history's most creative; election. Running against the French pup pet-emperor Bao Dai, the U.S.. puppet worm Diem claimed … only 98.2 per cent of the vote.

The only U.S. complaint was that 60 percent would have looked better. (*Life Magazine*, 5/ 13/57.)

The leaders of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) or "North Vietnam" attacked Diem for this and called for demonstrations against the cancellation of the elections decided on at Geneva when, as was inevitable -- since Diem had virtually no support -- they were officially cancelled. But the DRV leaders failed to expose the absurdity of having elections at all to decide whether Vietnam would be run by an imperialist-installed puppet, or the masses of working people. What right had the U.S. government to "run against the people?" More fundamentally, it is unimaginable that the U.S. would have given up had the elections in fact been held. This too the DRV leaders did not say. In other words, they fostered a movement in the southern section that relied on U.S. imperialism to hold elections and free the people (from U.S. imperialism). Aside from their acceptance of the Geneva Agreements in the first Place, the DRV leaders should not have asked the southern Vietnamese working people to wait two years, while they relied, we would guess, on the good graces of the Russians to make the U.S. government honest. That's a loser.

In any case, Vietnamese workers and peasants did not take Diem's vicious attempt at counterrevolution passively. Massive opposition to Diem's phony referendum developed in late '55. Massive demonstrations continued to 1956, protesting the cancellation of the elections. And in the countryside, the peasants fought back against the return of landlord rule and, with it, the vicious army/police raids.

Bernard Fall analyzed the increasingly violent struggle in the September, 1955, *Pacific Affairs*. He sketched two maps. One showed where Diem's violations of the Geneva Accords against persecuting Vietminh sympathizers had occurred. The other showed the location of revolutionary actions -raids, ambushes, assassinations of Diemist officials. The two maps were almost identical.

The U.S./Diem attempt to return landlords to local power and suppress the working people had led to renewed rebellion.

As the anti-U. S.1Diem forces grew stronger, they began to attack and sometimes wipe out Diemist forces, including

individual village chiefs and militia members who'd led the local "anti-communist" slaughters.

Diem's police and army saw their sources of information drying up one after another. To make good the lack, they resorted to worse barbarity, hoping to inspire an even greater terror among the villagers. (Phillippe Devillers "The Struggle for Unification of Vietnam," *China Quarterly*, 1/3/62.)

But nothing worked. By March, 1959. Diem had to admit it. His bogus "Republic of Vietnam" was "at war" -- i.e., in rebellion.

This official recognition of the revolution completely reversed Washington's earlier stand. From '54-'59, Americans were told all was well in Vietnam, that Diem was a gem. In fact, a group called the American Friends of Vietnam even hired a public relations firm to push this nonsense. Its founding members were not, by the way, "bad guys" Like Nixon or Goldwater. They were highly "liberal'" imperialists: for instance; John F Kennedy, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Max Lerner Not to mention Norman Thomas, the Socialist Party leader.

By November, 1960, things were going so badly (for U.S./Diem) that a section of the army staged an unsuccessful coup. A month later the National Liberation Front was formed under communist leadership.

THE MYTH OF NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESS1ON

The U.S. government has always maintained publicly that it's answering the call of the south Vietnamese who are supposedly being besieged by foreign tyrants. Let's consider this -- it's the U.S.'s main justification.

First, we've already seen that the U.S. "commitment" was really self-created. **The U.S. installed the Diem regime, which then "requested" U.S. help.** Contrary to liberals' arguments, the U.S. did not intervene in an on-going civil war. It installed and consolidated the reactionary side.

Second, until about 1965, there were very few north Vietnamese fighting in the south. The south Vietnamese REBELLION was a just response by south Vietnamese working people to terrible oppression by U.S./Diem. Only animals would not have fought back. The south Vietnamese fought back -- heroically. It did not take any "outside aggressors" to convince these people to fight back. The picture of the south Vietnamese as 'slow-moving, apathetic, yellow beasts of burden without feelings" is a vicious, insulting lie. It rests on and aims at reinforcing the racist image of Asians spread by the rulers of this country ever since the Chinese were forced over here to provide very cheap labor to build the transcontinental railroad. By pushing this racism, the rulers hope working people will accept as "natural" the killing of Asians. (One Of the GI's involved in the My Lai massacre said that "none of us would have accepted an order to kill people in cold blood ... I mean white people.")

Vietnamese working people have dealt hard blows against the U.S. ruling class. They have exposed it as never before. They've provided a living example of mass revolutionary struggle that inspired millions of workers and students. There is only one working class in this world, and it has nothing to do with color. Workers in every country have the same class interest. Their international class interest is to defeat the big businessmen, the capitalist class, all over -- and these billionaires are led by U.S. bosses. The working class must scrub off the racist filth bosses use to blind the people.

We stand with the father of one of the My Lai soldiers. Asked what he would have done if an officer ordered him to kill unarmed Vietnamese, this miner said: **"I would have shot the bastard right between the eyes."**

And consider: IF the U.S. really thought it was helping the southerners resist an evil invasion - why didn't it just give everyone guns to defend themselves? Arm the peasants! But the U.S. did the exact opposite. From 1954 to the present, the U.S. government has been trying to smash the Vietnamese peasants and workers.

The huge "anti-subversive" apparatus, directed against the bulk of the population and carrying out furious repression, linked with the anti-peasant "land reform" and other pro-landlord programs -- these showed that the U.S. and Diem knew the people were their enemies.

So much for the argument that the U. S. government is trying to bring democracy to the Vietnamese but it's hard because these savages think with their stomachs. As we have seen, democracy was the last thing the U. S. government could tolerate in south Vietnam. And as we have also seen, far from being "passive Orientals," the Vietnamese have fought with a courage and cooperative spirit that merits great respect.

Any aid the southerners could get from the north was and is completely justified.

So if the Vietnamese workers and peasants got help from the north -- assuming that help wasn't aimed at getting them to stop fighting -- more power to them. The unfortunate thing is that in the first six years of the rebellion, the DRV did not aid the south Vietnamese.

(Actually, the charge that the south Vietnamese rebellion was fomented by "outsiders" who "invaded the south" is not so unusual. U.S. imperialism always blames people's struggles on "outside agitators." As in the case of Vietnam, this first of all insults the people doing the rebelling. It says they're too stupid to know on their own that they're getting shafted and ought to rebel. Second, geographically speaking, very few people's movements are organized by strangers. And so what if they were? Third, by "outsider" the rulers don't really mean "stranger." It's really just a catchy way of describing someone who opposes them "Outside agitator" really means" "somebody who attacks us, the wonderful exploiters and murderers of working people all over the world, the adorable capitalist class.")

Next section: 1960 To 1965 -- People's War

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1960 to 1965 -- People's War

> ·... guerrillas have to live among the people. Guerrillas can't survive unless the people hide them. Mao Tse-tung has a thesis that goes something like this -- guerrillas hide among the population as the fish hide in the sea. This is a very true adage. (General Earl Wheeler, Army Chief of Staff, House Armed Services Committee testimony, January 27, 1964.)

> In Vietnam, only the Communists represent revolution and social change … 'the Communists ... remain the only Vietnamese still capable of rallying millions of their countrymen to sacrifice and hardship in the name of the nation and the only group not dependent on foreign bayonets for survival. (Neil Sheehan, *New York Times*.)

The creation of the National Liberation Front (NLF), which the U.S. Government calls "Viet Cong," marked a turning point in the war. It greatly raised the organizational level of the south Vietnamese people's fight. It allowed a fuller expression of the initiative of the people -- a full-blown People's War developed. The NLF. is led mainly by communists, members of the People's Revolutionary Party of south Vietnam, (P.R.P.) which is very closely linked to the communist party of the DRV.. The PRP's understanding of People's War, as described by anti-Communists in the quotes above, allowed them to play an important role in building the NLF. Unfortunately nationalism and other weaknesses have turned the PRP's role around completely. So while in the period from '60 to ' 65 the PRP and' NLF played a role in mobilizing the masses, relying on their experience and their initiative to smash the hell out of the U.S. government, now, in fact, these organizations are pushing for a deal with the U.S. which can only -- has already -- set back the Vietnamese people's struggle..

Douglas -Pike, a thoroughly anti-communist U.S. security agent in Saigon, described the early history of the NLF in his book *Viet Cong*.

The NLF was, according to Pike, a broad coalition whose purpose was:

> To engage as many Vietnamese as possible -- but in any case the vast majority -- in a revolt against the state. This was to be accomplished by organizing the population, or to be more precise, the rural 85 percent of the population, into manageable units to conduct the revolt. The rural Vietnamese was not regarded simply as a pawn in a power struggle but as the active element in the thrust. He was the thrust. (Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong*; page 84.)

> The NLF rapidly became a mass organization that reached into virtually every village in the country. The basic political unit of the NLF was the village-association There were various types: For the farmer, for example, the Farmers' Liberation Association meant: land reform; for the village women the Women's Liberation Association meant status and more equal rights with men. (Pike, page 166)

Pike, who is usually pretty bewildered by the mass character of the NLF, understates the situation. In fact, one of the crucial revolutionary acts of the NLF in this early period was the tremendous political involvement of women. This went far beyond mere formal political rights, and even formal equal rights weren't granted by Saigon. It meant that

millions of Vietnamese women were entering the class struggle as active participants.

This was only one of the tremendously liberating aspects of this People's War. There was also the tremendous involvement of the mountain tribesmen, The Vietnamese rulers had always taught the peasants to look with contempt on these "lowly savages" -- this racist attitude could then be used to prevent unity against the rulers. The NLF did an excellent job of organizing these people, who became one of the mainstays of the war against U.S. imperialism in Vietnam.

During the early years of the NLF:

... military activity, even guerrilla military activity, formed a relatively small percentage of the day-to-day work … much … time was devoted to training and indoctrination work, agit-prop and other propaganda activities among the general population, or in what was called economic production--mainly production of food. (Pike, p. 238.)

The reason? The NLF's objective at that time was :

> not the killing of ARVN ("Army of the Republic of Vietnam" -- the U.S.-controlled, puppet Army) soldiers, not the occupation of real estate, not the preparation for great pitched battles … but organization in depth of the rural population to restructure the social order of the village and train the villagers to control (sic! to organize!) themselves. (Pike, pp. 111, 238.)

This organizational and agitational phase referred to as the "struggle movement." The NLF was building a vast base in the "sea of the people."

> … it is important to understand the essentially political rather than military nature of the NLF's activities in the first period … virtually all effort was focused on the struggle movement, and the various acts of the violence program were designed to support that program, as, for example, the assassination of the Village chief. (Pike, p. 156;)

Indeed, terror was highly selective:

> … chiefly directed at total elimination, of the GVN (i.e., U.S./Saigon) apparatus in the village ... the killing of individuals was done with great specificity, as, for example, pinning note to the shirtfront of an assassinated government official, explaining the crimes he had committed ... (in fact**) the NLF theoreticians considered terror to be the weapon of the weak, the desperate, or the ineffectual guerrilla leader**. (Pike, pp. 250-51, our emphasis.)

Pike notes that:

> almost all Vietnamese … were of the firm opinion that as the result of Vietminh and then NLF activity, particularly in areas long under their control, deep, significant, and fundamental change had occurred in the social order ... the liberated area was characterized by a greater sense of equalitarianism, greater social mobility with

> individual merit counting for more and family for less, and a greater awareness of strata, class consciousness, or social solidarity. (Pike, pp. 372-73.)

SPECIAL WAR

Shortly after his inauguration, President Kennedy set up a Vietnam task force, to review the crumbling U.S. position. He saw that Diem was falling fast. Only escalation could delay an NLF victory. Economist Eugene Stanley and General Maxwell Taylor worked out the Stanley-Taylor plan of "special war" as a solution. Adopted in '61, its main points were

1. To set up 18,000 "strategic hamlet" concentration camps, to include **2/3 of the population**.

2. To increase all "south Vietnamese" armed forces and place them under much more direct control by a greater number of U.S. "advisers."

Thus "special war" was an attempt to isolate the population behind barbed wire and then force U.S.-controlled "natives" to wipe put the "native revolution. "

"Strategic hamlet" -- the name itself was a filthy lie. "Strategic hamlet" meant that the ARVN was ordered to destroy peasant homes, burn their rice, kill their water buffalo, herd them into camps surrounded by barbed wire and stakes -- OFTEN POINTING INWARD -- to prevent escape. Hitler had nothing over the U.S. government, Even the New York Times admitted:

… the hamlet program aroused deep popular resentment ... tens of thousands of peasants were forced to leave their homes and build new ones surrounded by barbed wire barricades. Communist propaganda focused effectively on the most objectionable aspects of the program, calling the hamlets concentration camps ... This charge, according to U.S. officials, was all too accurate in many instances. (*New York Times*, 12/3/63.)

The introduction of "special war" -- the increase in U.S. "advisers" controlling the ARVN, the tremendous increase in Diem's army, the introduction of helicopters in huge numbers, and the "strategic hamlet" program -- "special war" produced an apparent respite for Diem and the U.S. in mid- '62. But, actually, "special war" only isolated U.S./Diem EVEN MORE from the people. The NLF dug in even deeper. In '63, U.S./Diem was routed throughout the crucial Mekong Delta. In mid-'63, *New York Times* reporter Dave Halberstam wrote that "it was clear that the government had lost the initiative." (*Making of a Quagmire*, pp. 189-190.)

Finally, desperate, with the crisis once again upon it, the U.S. government dumped Diem in 1963. They had him and his closest aides slaughtered quickly and replaced. Diem was not killed, as U.S. officials pretend, because they discovered he was a vicious tyrant**. U.S. officials had planned most of his police and army actions in the first place.** His problem was that he had **failed**.

In '64, the NLF, pressing the offensive, freed vast areas. It wiped out most of ARVN's strategic reserves. An official U.S. report released April 1, 1964 admitted that 42 per cent of south Vietnam's villages were under NLF control, with the rest "contested." The ARVN desertion rate was disastrous. (This is not surprising. Most ARVN troops were poor peasants or workers who often respected the NLF and virtually always opposed U.S. imperialism.)

"Special war" had failed.

A lot of people think the "mad-man," Lyndon B. Johnson, is personally responsible for the escalation of the war that brought huge numbers of U.S. troops in and started the bombing of the DRV. This is nonsense. First of all, "special war" was just as vicious a strategy as the escalation adopted in 1965. LBJ only escalated because special war had failed. Second, although the first sharp escalation was the bombing of the DRV, following the famous Tonkin. Bay incident in August 1964, in fact, plans for escalation were all worked out under President Kennedy, the great liberal.

War against the communists already has erupted over the borders of south Vietnam in hit-and-run guerrilla raids and infiltration moves as far north as China … 50,000 elite south Vietnamese troops are-being trained to take the offensive in over-the-border strikes**. Last fall (i.e., 1964) when U.S. officials decided that it was impossible to win the war by confining it inside south Vietnamese borders; they began an expanded program of training the special guerrilla forces-at secret bases.** (*Aviation*, 4/6/64) (our emphasis.)

Georges Chaffard, the French correspondent, wrote that intelligence, counter-espionage, and sabotage missions against the DRV had been going on since at least 1957. And, he said**, they picked up in '61, when Kennedy sought to "disorganize the economic and military potential of the north."** (*Le Monde*, 8/9/64.

Not that LBJ was any good, to be sure, Except-he has plenty of company. And that includes JFK.

A lot of people were fooled by Kennedy because he talked nice. That reminds us of Lindsay, Lord Mayor of New York. Some people are fooled by him, because he comes on very friendly. This reveals the nature of the "dove." Thus Lindsay spoke at a demonstration called by the Mobilization Committee in 1968, a "peace" demonstration and this convinced some that he's not so bad. But on that very day he sent his tactical police to attack the Columbia students who had taken a building to protest the presence of the Institute for Defense Analysis on campus and Columbia's racist, anti-working class expansion program.

Next section: 1965 To 1968 -- U.S. Rulers Invade

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1965 to 1968 -- U.S. Rulers Invade

When Johnson ran as a "peace candidate" against the so-called war maniac, Goldwater, he was portrayed as a great "dove." This was a calculated lie. For in fact Johnson and the big bankers and businessmen for whom he spoke bad already decided to escalate the war to a fierce new level.

On February 7, using an NLF attack on U.S. forces at Pleiku as the excuse, The U.S. government began regular bombing of the DRV. At the same time, a vast buildup of U.S. troops in the :south began,

WHY ESCALATION?

The U.S. government claims this escalation was to meet "escalated aggression from the DRV," but U.S. leaders certainly knew that the NLF drew its strength from the people in the south. And the bombings were definitely not intended to halt the at-that-time nearly nonexistent flow of guns and men from the north (On the contrary, the bombing caused the DRV to send large-scale aid for the first time.)

Was the U.S. government crazy? Or were there reasons consistent with the course the U.S. had followed since before 1954?

The real reasons were:

1. To bolster morale in Saigon and delay NLF victory. "Special war" had been a flop. The ARVN desertion rate was ridiculous. The U.S. government hoped huge numbers of U.S. troops just might possibly (somehow) beat the NLF.

2. _To get the DRV to pressure the NLF to negotiate. The DRV would be hurt by bombing. The USSR could 'become more influential as the conflict became more complex, and they'd pressure the north. And the DRV had tremendous influence on the NLF. This second set of reasons was the key.

CAUGHT IN THE JAWS OF PEOPLE'S WAR

The history of the war from 1985 to 1988 is probably the best known to most Americans. The U.S. sent in first tens, then hundreds of thousands of troops. By mid-1968, there were about half a million U.S. troops in Vietnam. And, of course, the U.S. intensively bombed the DRV throughout this period.

What was the actual fighting like? Let's consider the first two dry seasons. (Dry season weather is favorable to U.S. government air strikes, used to cover ground actions.) During both, the U.S. launched large scale ground actions, with names like Operation Attleboro and Operation Junction City. They aimed at finding and destroying: large concentrations of "Vietcong." They failed, and U.S. government forces suffered high casualties .

Moreover, during this period NLF influence increased throughout southern Vietnam. The U.S. attempt to defeat the NLF by "pacifying" villages was a complete flop.

Thus *U.S. News and World Report* presented the following summation of "the truth about the war in Vietnam":

At The very moment when "smiling John" Lindsay was inside, the negotiating room "pledging" to New York prison rebellion leaders that all rebels would get "safe conduct" and not be harmed, the Mayor's cops were clubbing defenseless prisoners, as the photo proves (Of course, that's when "brave" cops really shine -- when they're got clubs and guns and outnumber an unarmed prisoner by 50 to l.) But what else could one expect from the bosses' mayor and the bosses' cops except treachery and brutality?

Prisons help the ruling class keep the lid on unemployment, racism and starvation. And when the prisoners rebel against this oppression, the bosses offer the same twin tactic as elsewhere -- first the "sweet talk" and then wham! with the billy club. When workers rule the only prisoners will be those who want to bring back the old exploitation and profit system -- and if they can't be rehabilitated to working-class way of thinking, that's where they'll stay.

Picture from *Challenge*, Nov. l, 1970

Out in the countryside, where American influence, is felt least, things are going worst in this war. Pacification is not only moving "slowly" as Washington reports, but in some areas the program is in- danger of outright failure. The South Vietnamese Army is still undisciplined, lacking leadership and-motivation …. (What a distorted, implicitly racist way of describing the situation! The ARVN soldiers weren't "undisciplined and lacking motivation" -- they hated the U.S. government and its ARVN. These same soldiers fought magnificently after deserting to the NLF ...) The desertion rate is appalling. In 1967, of every 1000 troops, fewer than 750 will remain at the end of the year. Desertions from the 59-man pacification teams are growing ... Near Saigon itself, the program is stagnant.

And in the "First Corps" area--the northernmost provinces of South Vietnam:

> ... despite official claims to the contrary, the Marines have suffered a number of defeats ... The Marines' strategy of securing and pacifying the countryside. along the coastal plain has failed ... It has been impossible even to secure the big marine enclaves from occasional attack ...

ARVN desertions, according to the *New York Times*, occurred at an even greater rate than suggested by *U.S. News and World Report*. In 1964, according to official figures. there were 73,319 desertions; in 1965, 113,462; and in 1966, 116,406. (Quoted in Phillippe Devillers, *Nation*, Sept. 18, 1967.)

Now consider what *New York Times* reporter Charles Mohr said about NLF morale:

> The most striking impression ... was the depth of the professional respect the Americans had for their enemy ... Major Beckwith called the attacking troops '"the finest soldiers I have ever seen in the world except Americans. I wish we could recruit them, he said. "I wish we knew what they were drugging them with to make them fight like that. They are highly motivated and highly dedicated." (*New York Times*, 10/28/65.)

The counter-revolutionary class character of the American-Saigon war effort remained unchanged. Neil Sheehan wrote in the *New York Times* in 1966:

> Vietnamese with a stake in traditional society … cooperated with France. Now the same Vietnamese for identical reasons, cooperate with the United States ... Nguyen Cao Ky was a French pilot ... other generals in the Saigon military junta were officers or sergeants in the French colonial forces.

Where the U.S. and Saigon regained control the first thing "pacification" teams did was try to restore the land ownership and political power of the landlordrs. A *Boston Globe* correspondent, writing from Saigon, made this point very clearly:

ARMY HELPS LANDLORDS MILK PEASANTS

As the Vietnamese describe the war here, it looks and sounds very much like a struggle between landless peasants. in the countryside and their absentee landlords … For peasants living in areas controlled by the Vietcong the Saigon Government represents the threat that their lands will be taken away from them and their old rents exacted again ... The old landowners ... are the mainstay of the South Vietnamese Government and Army ... they are the class that supports the present social order … After the troops seize an area that the VC have held, the landowners move right in after them and even use the troops to help collect back rents. (*Boston Globe*, 1/8/68.)

Things were definitely getting worse for the U.S. government in Vietnam.

They must have had a very good reason for staying. And indeed they did.

The Ruling Class …

... IS the Government!

A study was made of 234 federal policy-making officials during the years 1944-1960. It excluded Presidents and included only those officials with the highest ranks. In total, people who'd come from big business, investment and corporate law held almost 60 percent of these posts. A mere 45 of them filled a third of all posts. (See Gabriel Kolko *The Roots of American Foreign Policy*, pp. 13-26.) In other words, the rich control this government very directly. Workers in the U.S. face the same enemy as Vietnamese workers and farmers -- a government of- businessmen who rule for businessmen.

Next section: Vietnam: An Imperialist War

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Vietnam: An Imperialist War

Some argue that the U.S. is fighting to honor commitments to a legitimate government, that this is frustrated by ignorant "natives" who think with their bellies and couldn't care less who runs things. History shows this is baloney,

But important disagreements still remain to be settled.

Is the war part of a world-wide strategy of U.S. imperialism, a strategy necessary for the survival of U.S. capitalism? Or is it the result of mistakes and pig-headed conservatism?

This question is crucial.

To begin with, let's consider whether the U.S. has had a consistent strategy of opposing any movement that hurts U.S. economic interests?

Take the case of Guatemala. In 1954 the Arbenz government raised the minimum wage **from 26 cents to $1.08 a day (!)** and started a mild land reform. This included the expropriation of 243,000 acres of uncultivated land owned by the United Fruit Company.

President- Eisenhower and John. Foster Dulles had the Central Intelligence Agency overthrow the Arbenz government. Dulles was both a stock holder in, and long-time corporation counsel for United Fruit

The C.I.A. organized, trained, and equipped an invasion force, provided air cover, and succeeded in toppling Arbenz. In his place the agency installed a pro-U.S. dictatorship. The new government halted land reform, returned expropriated land, disenfranchised 70 per cent of the population, smashed trade unions, cut wages and abolished taxes on profits of foreign investors. (*See New York Times*, 4/28/66, for verification of the CIA's role.)

Or take Iran. In 1951 the government of Premier Mossadegh nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. A U.S.-directed coup overthrew Mossadegh. Iran's highly profitable oil was turned over to a four-nation consortium. The U.S. share was 40 per cent. (David Horowitz, *Free World Colossus*, pp. 187ff.)

Or consider Lebanon. July 15, i958.10,000 Marines were landed, with two goals. First, to roll back the rebellion against the overwhelmingly unpopular "President" Chamoun -- a rebellion which the *London Sunday Times* labeled a "calculated defiance of authority **by at least half the population**." (Our emphasis.) Second, to deal With the highly popular coup by Kassem in Iraq. The U.S. made clear that any action **against Western oil interests** in Iraq .could lead to a joint U.S.-British invasion. (Horowitz, p. 192.)

The list could go on indefinitely. For example, the history of 20th century Latin America is filled with U.S. bribes, threats and invasions aimed at defeating revolution. Why did the U.S: invade the Dominican Republic 5 years ago? Did the government really believe that the famous "53 reds" were threatening the security of Manhattan? Or did Washington fear that the Dominican people,

'who were armed, would throw out U.S. business interests -- which had been draining the country for years -- and thus set a bad example for the rest of the world? (Not to mention hurting those businesses.)

Vietnam has occurred and is occurring more and more all over the world. Wherever the dollar wishes to go, the flag hovers, armed to the teeth with money for bribes and guns for violence,

protecting those interests.

In 1913, Pres. Wilson let the cat out of the bag:

> Suppose you go to Washington and try to get at your Government. You will always find that while you are politely listened to, the men really consulted are the men who have the biggest stake -- the big bankers, the big manufacturers, the big masters of commerce, the heads of railroad corporations and of steamship corporations ... The masters of the Government of the United States are the combined capitalists and manufacturers of the Unite States

Marine Brigadier .General Smedley Butler, quoted below, was also quite frank:

> I spent thirty-three years and four months in active service as a member of our country's most agile military force -- the Marine Corps. I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street, and for the bankers. In short I was a racketeer for capitalism ...
>
> Thus I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I: helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank to collect revenues in … I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I helped make Honduras "right" for American fruit companies in 1903. I brought light to the Dominican -Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested. (*Common Sense*, November 1935.)

Many people agree that America used to be imperialist, but not today. They think it no longer needs extensive investment opportunities, raw material and cheap labor sources, it doesn't need to prevent other countries from controlling these assets in the "underdeveloped" world and thereby effectively competing against the U.S. But listen to these words from the horse's mouth:

> We submit that to restrict -- or to permit to be restricted U.S. investment abroad will not only kill the goose that lays the golden eggs but will serve to deplete our store of golden eggs as well. (Machinery and Allied Products Institute, 1965 a research association for manufacturers.)

And as *Business Week* put it:

> Late in the 1940's -- and with increasing speed all through the 1950's and up to the present --... In industry after industry U.S. companies found that their overseas earnings were soaring, and that their return on investment was frequently much higher than in the U.S. As earnings (abroad) began to rise, profit margins from domestic operations started to shrink; costs in the U.S. climbed faster than prices,

> competition stiffened as markets neared their saturation points. (*Business Week*, April 20, 1963, p.70)

The argument that U.S. Vietnam policy stems from the economic needs of U.S. Imperialism rests on two solid rock facts. First, the fact that U.S. Imperialism does need to control the poor, or "third world," or "underdeveloped countries. Second, the fact that U. S. foreign consistently been to crush revolutions whenever these appeared to threaten the interests of US. Business, in the short or long run.

Arnold Toynbee put it this way:

> ... America is today the leader of a world-wide anti-revolutionary movement in defence of vested interests. She now stands for what Rome stood for; Pome consistently supported the rich against the poor in all foreign communities that fell under her sway; and since the poor have always and everywhere been far more numerous than-the rich, Rome's policy made for inequality, for injustice, and for the least happiness of the greatest number. America's decision to adopt Rome's role has been deliberate, if I have gauged it right. (Arnold Toynbee, *America and the World Revolution*; this section is reprinted in Horowitz, p.15.)

And LBJ also explained the matter:

> We cannot shorten the length of our reach into the world … The economic network of this shrinking globe is too intertwined. The political order. of continents is too involved with one another.(*New York Times*, March 17, 1966.) ;

Since World War II the U.S has in fact emerged as the main imperialist power replacing the European imperialists in many areas. In order-to protect and constantly expand its investments abroad and hold back the development of economically competitive forces -- both being objectives vital to the health of the U.S. economy -- America has become the main political bastion of, and military policeman for, counter-revolution. U.S. suppression of revolutionary movements is intended to aid U.S. business.

(Note: As we have said, in our estimate, foreign investments and foreign sources of cheap labor and raw materials are absolutely necessary for the survival of U.S. capitalism. As Marxist-Leninists see it, 20th century capitalism is indeed an imperialist system. This means no amount of reforms can transform U.S. business or its servant, the U.S. government, into a "nice guy" in the world: the workers need to make a socialist revolution. The question of imperialism is discussed more in Appendix One at the end of this pamphlet.)

The early 20th century European imperialists thrived under the "weight of the white man's. burden." The present-day U.S. imperialists do tolerably well making "sacrifices for democracy" (which ready means: Workers here and around the world make **sacrifices**. The rich parasites make **money**.)

But why Vietnam?

We made those decisions to intervene because in the judgment of the presidents, American power and interest demanded it. (RN Goodwin former aide to President Kennedy and Johnson, now a super-dove. *New York Times*, 2/5/67.)

There are three main reasons why Vietnam.

First, Asia , including Vietnam, is "one of the last frontiers of American investment." (Jules Henry, *Nation*, 4/25/66.)Thus the Vice-President of Chase Manhattan Bank in charge of Far Eastern operations said in 1966 that "U.S; actions in Vietnam this year ... have considerably reassured both Asian and Western investors." Wages in Asia are the world's lowest. That means profits are highest. :

Back in 1954,*U.S. News and World Report*, in an article entitled "WHY U.S. RISKS WAR FOR INDOCHINA: IT'S THE KEY TO CONTROL OF ALL ASIA," explained:

> One of the world's richest areas is open to the winner in Indochina. That's behind the growing U.S. concern … tin, rubber, rice, key strategic raw materials are what the war-is really all about. The: U.S. sees :it as a place to hold -- at any cost (April 4, 1954.)

In 1953, Eisenhower agreed fully and publicly (Quoted 13 years later, in *New York Times*, 7/26/66.)So did Henry Cabot Lodge, ten years later. *(Boston Globe*, 2/28/65.) And Senator McGee of Wyoming summed it up:

> That empire in Southeast Asia is the last major resource area outside the control of any of the major powers on the globe (Speech in U.S. Senate, 2/17/65.)

Second, in a world more and more torn by massive revolutionary battles, Asia, so important to the U.S. economically, is also the scene of the fiercest struggles against imperialism. Thus armed rebellions are developing in the Philippines, Burma, Malaysia and Indonesia. In India, a peasant revolution has begun and is spreading. In Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and South Vietnam, movements are fighting huge U.S. forces -- ARVN-type armies led by U.S. "advisers, or huge numbers of regular U.S. troops.

Of all these movements, the south Vietnamese People's War is by far the strongest. The U.S.

Government desperately needs to crush this People's War -- or reverse it! -- as a lesson and to create a safe rear for operations against other Asian revolutions,

The third and main reason is China. Exploitation of China was supposed to make this an "American Century," as *Life* magazine put it over twenty years ago. And the U.S. government had maintained an "open door" to China. for forty years. It was the main force behind Chiang Kai-shek's anti-communist Kuomintang for years. But, after World War II, just when U.S. -businesses were about to walk in through the "open door," it was .slammed- shut in their faces. Since that time, the key U.S. government strategy in Asia been to turn the Chinese communist revolution around. They would like to. do this peacefully, of course -- they would like Russian-type "reds" to run China, and a lot of the U.S. government's diplomatic, economic and military effort in Asia has been aimed at moving the Chinese leaders to the right politically, But if the ruling class decides that

This attempt is a total flop in China, the U.S. government is ready to fight. In this it is supported -- super-supported -- by the Russian leaders. The Soviet rulers have taken the U.S. government into their confidence and now discuss all problems with their brother imperialists -- including the smoldering border war against China. The U.S. war against Vietnam must be seen, therefore in the broader context of a U.S./Russian anti-red-China policy. The: U.S. rulers want Vietnam to be part of their anti-Chinese communism strategy. That can be achieved either by (a) U.S. control or (b)

Soviet domination of Vietnam. The U.S. imperialists don't miss a trick.

When we discuss the most recent history of the war and revisionism in Vietnam, we will refer again to this question.

So the U.S. government has, from its imperialist standpoint, quite good reasons for being in Vietnam. And, for our part, workers and students should base our actions on. an understanding of this key fact.

The U.S. government must be driven out of Vietnam.

Next section: Negotiate? Or U.S. Get Out Now!

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Negotiate? Or U.S. Get Out Now!

Negotiations are the most striking fact about the Vietnam war today. The talks dominate DRV/NLF leaders' strategic thinking. In this section we will consider two important questions about the negotiations: first, whether they are good for Vietnamese working people and the working class all over the world; second, how the political basis for these talks was laid. In the next chapter -- NEGOTIATIONS DRAIN PEOPLE'S .WAR -- we will relate the development of negotiations to the actual fighting in Vietnam and show how the people's forces have been undermined.

Some have argued: "All right, even though the U.S. is wrong and the war is imperialist, why do people have to attack negotiations? Why not back some more reasonable man -- a man like McCarthy -- who'd get the whole thing over with. Is it pro-imperialist' to be for peace in Vietnam?"

Many would agree with this position. And this stand often represents a real change in people's views -- from thinking the war is just, to seeing it must he opposed.

But simply opposing the war is not enough. For even it if does "all end," finally, the main question remains: Who won?

The war is not the result of irrational passions. The U.S. government knew what it was doing when it attacked the Vietnamese working people. The Vietnamese were being quite rational when they

refused to lie down and be stepped on. Peace is all well and good -- but if that were all Vietnamese workers and peasants wanted, they would never have rebelled against the 'peace U.S. imperialism installed after the Geneva negotiations in 1954.

When "the mess is all over with," will Vietnamese working people be stuck in living hell?

NEGOTIATIONS: THE U.S. GETS ONE FOOT OUT OF THE GRAVE

In discussing negotiations we should keep in mind the situation in Vietnam up to 1968, when talks began.

The imperialists were desperate to defeat people's war in Vietnam. But things weren't going well. The more troops the U.S. government sent in, the worse the situation became.

This really isn't so strange. It follows a basic law. The U.S. government was kicking the Vietnamese. The law in operation was discovered a while ago by the German communist, Karl Marx: "He who gets kicked, kicks back!"

As long as the anti-U.S. forces relied thoroughly on the people -- the ones who were getting kicked by imperialist oppression for so long -- their ability to fight imperialism increased as much as the U.S. escalated.

The more troops the U.S. government sent, the, more furiously ten million fought back. And the vivid and moving -- the heroic! -- picture of millions of working people standing up to the robber of continents, inspired tens of millions, hundreds of millions around the world, brought the oppressed shouting and fighting to their feet.

People's War -- relying on the understanding, the collective knowledge and strength of the oppressed to overthrow the

class rule of their oppressors -- People's War was grinding U.S. imperialism face down in the dirt.

A majority of the elite Marine Corps had been wiped out.

U.S. strategic army reserves were nearly exhausted.

Much of the U.S. Air Force had been blown out of the sky by rifles and conventional anti-aircraft weapons.

The 'unbeatable' U.S. imperialist army with its' deadly 'enormous fire power' and devastating 'war of mobility' was getting beaten! Morale was zero. U.S. soldiers -- who did not want to fight Vietnamese working people in the first place -- were being used as bait to get NLF troops close enough 'for artillery or air strikes!

In the U.S., black rebellions occurred in over a thousand cities. Strikes were shaking the country. The economy was a mess.

It isn't surprising that the U.S. government wanted negotiations.

"DOVES" AND "HAWKS" AGREE: SAVE CAPITALISM !

"But," one might argue, "imperialism is not monolithic! When the negotiations started, didn't the liberal 'dove' politicians want the U.S. to get out?"

As we discussed earlier, the difference between "hawk" and "dove" politicians is over when to use the carrot and when (not whether) to use the stick. Both argue that workers must be kept "in their place." And, of course, "doves" like to smile when they stab you. (Thus "dovish" John F. Kennedy named a Vietnam concentration camp program "Operation Sunrise.

Let's see what the so-called "doves" had to say, in the year before negotiations actually started. Here's Robert F. Kennedy, at that time chief "dove":

Nearly all Americans share with us the determination to remain in Vietnam **until we have fulfilled our commitments** … (no division) will erode American will and compel American withdrawal. (*New York Times,* 3/3/.67; our emphasis)

McCarthy's stand was identical:

He said at Fond Du Lac that U.S. troops probably would remain in Vietnam for a "long long time" even if there is an armistice in the fighting. "I would expect there would be formal arrangements to say who would be there and in how many numbers." (*Boston Herald Traveler,* 3/26/68)

It would be "precipitous" to remove U.S. forces within six months of negotiations as propose by President Johnson (McCarthy said). " I think I would advise him against moving that fast," McCarthy said. "I would put the time limit at five years."(*America,* a Jesuit magazine, 12/16/67)

(By the way -- who was the dove, LBJ or McCarthy?????)

RFK put it most clearly when he referred to the necessity of "fulfilling our commitments." The only "commitment" the U.S. government ever made in Vietnam was to itself. That is, the U.S. government promised itself that Vietnam would be turned into a base ...-for what? A base, essentially, for its key strategy -- the defeat of workers' rule in China. What RFK and McCarthy were arguing was: (there is) no chance of a victory "by further escalation." (*America*, ibid.)

That is, as long as Vietnamese working people fight a People's War, these "doves" reasoned," the more we kick, the harder we'll get kicked back. Useless! The problem therefore was how to stifle People's War in Vietnam. Negotiations were the "solution."

"But," one might ask, "let's say People's War was "stifled"? What of it? What's wrong with peace ?'

PEOPLE'S WAR AND SOCIALISM? OR "PEACEFUL" OPPRESSION!

People's War is not a trick name you use when you want your side to sound good, the way John F. Kennedy called Vietnam a war "for free world virtues." People's War means workers and peasants making a revolution against terrible oppression, when the oppressor is very strong militarily. It is a very protracted revolution. Instead or relying on super-machines and forcing workers to fight other workers -- the way the U.S. government does -- instead of relying on money and guns, People's War relies on and serves the needs of THE PEOPLE: workers and peasants. It tries to turn every ability of the millions of oppressed, all their wealth of class knowledge, all their capacity to struggle together, every bit of their revolutionary anger, into a weapon. It means unleashing their creative ability to make revolution against the bankers and businessmen who try to divide and kill working people to continue exploiting them. From the oppressor's viewpoint, People's War is very "unconventional" -- it relies on the people he is oppressing. It is the exact opposite of his war -- imperialist war. People's War is working class war.

During the period of French rule, many

Vietnamese landlords and big businessmen were irritated by French stinginess towards them. They wanted a bigger share of the booty. Nevertheless, these "mandarins" never organized to drive the French out of Vietnam, never called for revolution. They feared that once the people were "let loose" they would sweep away landlords and big businessmen. And that is indeed the logic of People's War. Some consider People's War a tactic for getting a foreign oppressor out. That can be one of its effects, certainly. But the essence of People's War is socialism. For it relies -- it must rely on unleashing the class hatred of the oppressed and on vastly strengthening their revolutionary class unity.

Why should working people -- peasants and workers -- go back to the "business as usual" of getting a boot in the face after they understand, at last, that they can win?? The logic of People's War if it is allowed to develop, is that workers and peasants will seize power -- socialism! This can be thwarted -- temporarily -- for instance by confusing and misleading the people with nationalism into losing sight of class goals. But such sellouts can be only temporary.

Now, of course, People's War involves real suffering. But what good is "peace" if the old oppressors -- the imperialists, the landlords, the local businessmen -- return? Their rule means incessant suffering, dragging on and on -- until a new revolution sweeps the oppressors away.

Under the 5 years of Japanese rule in Vietnam two million starved to death. If anyone thinks this "peace" is preferable to smashing imperialism, let him consider seriously the position of a worker or poor peasant in Vietnam. **We are not cold to the suffering of Vietnamese workers and peasants.** But it is rotten "sympathy" that ends up handing the people to oppressors.

"But," someone could say, "isn't all war had?"

Of course war is terrible -- but how do you end war? We can only end war by smashing the rule of those who profit from and therefore make war -- the imperialists. War can only be ended through socialist revolution. Or consider this:

War in "peace time" is a constant fact of life for millions! U.S. workers who die of speed-up are Victims of the boss class's war. **Latin American kids with rickets are wounded in combat**.

And if a deal is worked out in Vietnam with the imperialists, what would that mean for the rest of the oppressed in the world? It would mean strengthening the U.S. government's ability to put down revolts in Asia and elsewhere, strengthen their political/military encirclement of China.

1967: NLF/DRV LEADERS BACKSLIDE

The liberal politicos used to claim they were the ones who wanted negotiations. LBJ and "hawks" like him would never negotiate, or so the "doves" said.

Except that's not the way it worked out. As the history of the last three years shows, all the imperialists -- "doves" and "hawks alike -- were willing to negotiate. The question was: when? LBJ was for holding out longer than Kennedy or McCarthy,

In any case until 1967, DRV/NLF leaders were not willing to negotiate. They scoffed at the idea. They said that our points were the precondition for talks, and the first point was that the U.S. had to withdraw from the south. Ho Chi Minh, the late DRV leader, put it this way in 1965:

> Let the American imperialists cease aggression, terminate all military operations against the DRV and withdraw the U.S. troops from south Vietnam, then peace will be established at once in Vietnam. (quoted two years later in 1/1/67 *New York Times*)

But starting with an interview with Nguyen Duy Trinh in late January 1 967, the DRV/ NLF leaders have publicly changed their stand. Here's how Ho Chi Minh stated the new public position:

> After the unconditional cessation of U.S. bombing raids and all other acts of war against the DRV, the DRV and U.S. could enter into talks and discuss questions concerning both sides. (*U.S. News and World Report*, 4/3/67)

Withdrawal was dropped as a precondition for talks; so were the DRV's other three points. This weakened anti imperialist forces around the world. Liberal "dove" imperialists -- who wanted negotiations to defeat Vietnamese 'workers and peasants -- were strengthened by the new policy. And assorted revisionists -- sellouts posing as reds -- like the decaying "Communist" Party U.S.A. and the anti-revolutionary Russian regime -- these finks, who for years had been advising the Vietnamese to talk turkey, these counter-revolutionary mummies in red wrappings were injected with life by the Vietnamese's new "stop the bombing and negotiate" line.

Vietnamese leaders publicly praised the imperialist "doves":

> Among even U.S. political circles, many well-known figures, including Senators

> Mansfield, Cooper, McCarthy, Kennedy, etc., have seen the right way to follow and demanded that the Johnson administration stop bombing North Vietnam so as to make talks possible. (Vietnamese News Agency, 3/1/68)

WHY LEADERS CHANGED THEIR STAND

Shortly after the Vietnamese leaders reversed their position, agreeing to negotiate if there were an unconditional bombing halt, Theodore Draper said the following about the change:

> On February 8 (1967), as the military truce in Vietnam went into effect, Soviet Premier Kosygin arrived in London for talks with prime Minister Harold Wilson. On that same day, Kosygin pointedly referred to Nguyen Duy Trinh's offer to negotiate in return for a cessation of bombing, and gave it his blessing. He saw fit to offer the same advice the following day. Since the Soviet leaders had previously refrained from injecting themselves publicly into the North Vietnamese-United States negotiating problem, this deliberate repetition represented a new policy. There is reason to believe that the Soviet leaders decided to back North Vietnam's new one-point negotiating position because they had had something to do with bringing it about. According to Burchett (a pro-Russian Australian journalist), it was "open knowledge that a number of Socialist-bloc countries were urging such a move over a year ago;" but the North Vietnamese leaders had resisted....the Soviets had clearly influenced Ho Chi Minh and his colleagues to come down from their four points (*New York Review of Books*, May 4, 1967; our emphasis)

The Vietnamese leaders were willing to talk, but the U. S. government still wasn't satisfied. All agreed that the Russians were pressuring Hanoi and the NLF. But, as the *New York Times* noted, the question remained:

> How much influence do the Russians really have in Hanoi? How far can they move the North Vietnamese toward a settlement? What posture by the United States would most help them to succeed? (February 11, 1967)

"How much influence do the Russians have?" That was the question. Both "hawks "and "doves" wanted a "peace" that would jibe with U.S. imperialist aims in Vietnam and East Asia The way "doves" read it, Russian political influence was already- strong enough for "profitable" negotiations. "Hawks" felt this was wishful thinking

Thus, in arguing for immediate negotiations, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., the "dove" (who had earlier backed Ngo Dinh Diem), said:

> Let the burden of delivering Hanoi to the negotiating table fall on Moscow. (*New York Times,* 3/9/67)

But LBJ and Company delayed over a year before agreeing to preliminary talks. Why did they stall from January 1987 to early 1968 to begin preliminary talks ? Because they didn't think the NLF/DRV leaders were tame enough yet. Thus Secretary of State Dean Rusk said in reply to "dove" Kennedy:

> "I don't think the problem is Kosygin's sincerity," he (Secretary Rusk) said. "The problem is Hanoi's attitude." (*New York Times*, 2/2/87)

"Let's talk now," said the "doves," arguing that the Russians had already done their job.

"Wait until later," answered LBJ and company. And turning to the Russian regime they added, friendly but firm: "Do better!" The Russians, scared silly that People's War might spread and increase Chinese influence (*Manchester Guardian*, 2/13/67) rolled up their sleeves and really went to work.

Just one year after the first public NLF/DRV back-sliding, the Vietnamese leaders announced a new stand -- or rather, a new retreat. In the beginning of 1968, Vietnamese leaders said an unconditional bombing halt would **automatically** lead to talks. From a diplomatic viewpoint they were begging.

Within a few months preliminary talks had begun.

Next Section: Negotiations Drain People's War

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Negotiations Drain People's War

Why did the U.S. government want negotiations? U.S. rulers weren't interested in "peace" talks just in order to work out the details of a "good" settlement. Much more was involved. In fact, they hoped the very process of negotiating would help curb the revolutionary initiative of peasants and workers and thereby stifle people's war. And that's just what happened.

* * * *

As we mentioned, in January 1967 DRV/NLF leaders back-slid for the first time on the question of talks. They said publicly that talks could start when the U.S. unconditionally halted the bombing. Then, one year later, the Vietnamese leaders retreated again. An unconditional bombing halt, they now said, "will automatically lead to discussions" (*Le Monde*, 1/6/68). From "could start" to "will start."

This 1968 position -- automatic negotiations -- produced quite an uproar. Within four months, preliminary talks had begun. Let's see how this took place.

Just one month after the "will automatically talk" statement, NLF and DRV troops launched the now famous Tet Offensive of 1968. They seized major cities, provincial capitals, and medium-sized and small towns all over the south. Fighting was furious. Rank-and-file Vietnamese revolutionaries carried out collective deeds of heroism rarely equaled. Day after day, in cities like Hué, under ferocious U.S. government bombing and shock-troop assault, the revolutionaries held firm. Very few prisoners were taken from their ranks.

Supporters of the Vietnamese working people were greatly moved. It seemed that the revolutionaries were about to win! If only they could hold out …

But they didn't. Position after ,position was re-taken. The working class heroes who held the U.S.'s Saigon embassy were soon wiped out to a man. Hué fell. The U.S. claimed that tens of thousands of revolutionaries had died.

TET: A TALE OF TWO NEWS STORIES

On February 7, 1968, during the Tet Offensive, *Le Monde* reported an NLF call for a "general uprising" in south Vietnam. Three days later, the same paper carried an interview with the DRV's foreign minister. He said talks could start right away once the U.S. stopped bombing the north.

Think about this. Doesn't it sound weird? NFL/DRV leaders really expected the general uprising to take place then why would they call for talks during the very Tet Offensive that was supposed to culminate in that uprising?

In other words, which of the two positions -- the "call" for talks or the "call" for overthrowing the U.S. -- which of the two contradictory "calls" was put forward honestly?

This is an important question. To understand it better, let's consider the place of "general offensives" and "general uprisings" in the theory and practice of People's War.

The theory of People's War, as put forth by Vietnamese leaders, involves three distinct stages. Here is a description

by the famous DRV general, Vo Nguyen Giap:

> A war of this nature in general entails several phases ... Starting from the stage of contention, it goes through a period of equilibrium before arriving at a general counter-offensive ... Only a long-term war could enable us to utilize to the maximum our political trump cards ... to transform our weakness into strength. (*People's Army, People's War*, Hanoi, 1961, p. 29)

This makes sense. Technical superiority, air and sea power for instance, lies with imperialists, The strength of workers and peasants can only lie in the revolutionary efforts of the oppressed fighting their oppressors. **"Transform weakness into strength!"** In the early phases, the people's forces are small, disorganized, without weapons, because their supporters, the working people, are oppressed, divided, deprived of modern weapons. But the class knowledge of millions of workers and peasants, their understanding that imperialism, their oppressor, must be smashed -- this knowledge can turn workers and peasants into a vast army, a net with a million loops to snarl and confound, to snag and strangle the rulers.

The imperialists get rich by keeping most people down. That is why they're weak.

Of necessity, this is a long, drawn out war. Before the people's forces can rise to a higher level, they must fully develop the people's initiative on the present level. Everything must be rooted in the people, for they are the only support. Thus, of course, the highest level of struggle, the actual period of "general counter -offensive," requires the full mobilization of workers and peasants, very clear on exactly what must be done, thoroughly organized. And before the actual "general counter-offensive" begins. the imperialists must be all worn out, their reserves gone. They must be in total retreat. Truong Chinh, another DRV leader, described this stage as follows:

> (in this stage) our consistent aim is that the whole country should rise up and go over to the offensive on all fronts, completely defeat the enemy ... (*The Resistance Will Win*, Hanoi, 1960, pp. 149-153)

Does this sound familiar? It sounds like the general uprising that the DRV/NLF leaders "called" for when Tet started. But,` as we can see, while the leaders called for an uprising and engaged in a vast and very costly offensive as if an uprising could take place, they really never expected that uprising. They knew better than anyone that they were nowhere near the final stage of people's war.

But why issue an absurd call for a general uprising, mount a massive but hopeless offensive, and then, 3 days later at the peak of the offensive, call for talks? The mind boggles.

FATAL BLOW OR NEGOTIATIONS BLUFF?

In an official statement, in April 1968, the DRV claimed that:

> The generalized offensive and uprising of the South Vietnam armed forces and people (during Tet) early this year have inflicted on the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys a fatal blow. Nothing can save from collapse the puppet administration and army, props of U.S. neocolonialism in South Vietnam. **Nothing can save the U.S. aggressors from a total defeat**. (*Boston Globe*, 4/3/88; emphasis added)

This statement was made after Tet. By that time anyone could see this was an outright lie. There was no "fatal blow." Why would the NLF/ DRV leaders lie?

Perhaps it wasn't a he-Perhaps they didn't know! But how could that be?

The Vietnamese leaders have vast resources for information; lead a million strong national Liberation Front, an organization which is everywhere. They know just how the fighting is going. When they said the U.S. was finished in Vietnam, they knew they were talking nonsense.

SO WHY WOULD THEY LIE?

Because Tet was not, as they said, an attempt to seize power. The clue is that weird second "call," mentioned earlier, the DRV foreign minister's call for immediate talks. Because, far from

being a truly revolutionary act, Tet was in fact a gigantic bluff, a negotiating tactic, a big show aimed at convincing the U.S. to begin talks right away. The leaders threw tens of thousands of the best troops against U.S.-held cities. On the one hand., they publicly threatened total uprising. This was meant to maintain the morale of the NLF and its supporters. On the other hand, they told the U.S. the real story: "we're willing to talk; you know and we know we can't win now. But if you don't talk soon, we'll cause you great political embarrassment in the U.S. by indicting heavy losses by staging suicide offensives like Tet."

Johnson got the point. He answered with a " gesture: on Feb. 9 he called a bombing halt. This was hardly enough for the DRV/ NLF leaders. To show their dissatisfaction they increased pressure on the U.S. stronghold Khesanh, under bitter siege at the time.

Rumors flew. Then, on March 31, LBJ made his famous "peace" speech. He wouldn't run again. He'd limit bombing to the 20th parallel and below--that is, to the southern part of the DRV.

At first the DRV labeled this a farce. (*N.Y. Times*, 4/3/68-) Even Fulbright attacked LBJ. The Vietnamese leaders would never accept such a phony offer, he said. (*Boston Globe*, 4/2/68.)

He spoke too soon. The DRV abruptly changed its stand, declaring its willingness to start preliminary talks right away so that a full-scale bomb-halt could occur and regular negotiations begin.

> U.S. officials said privately they were "flabbergasted" that Hanoi had agreed to contact with the United States in response to President Johnson's move ... Hanoi's offer was regarded as a significant tactical concession. (*New York Times*, 4/4/68)

What a lot of wheeling and dealing, what a lot of scheming instead of revolutionary struggle. But the worst Part of it all was: although the Tet offensive was just part of a sellout maneuver to pressure Johnson, nevertheless it was no game. Many thousands of revolutionaries were slaughtered. They never had a chance.

HANOI BENDS OVER BACKWARDS

The terms of Johnson's offer were an insult, even when compared to Hanoi's sellout "automatic negotiations position"

of January l968; That is, there wasn't even a real bomb halt. The quantity of bombs dropped was to remain the same. The only thing was they'd now be dropped all in one area, the southern portion of the DRV!

Even these miserable terms were not observed by the U.S. Thus bombing was supposed to be limited to the southern DRV, yet areas in the northern sections were bombed. On a visit to Hanoi, CBS overseas reporter R. Collingwood asked DRV leader Pham Van Dong about this. Collingwood reported that:

> Hanoi would not be diverted by small incidents or **minor contradictions between American actions and what they interpret as American words**. (*N.Y. Times,* 4/7/68, our emphasis).

FROM PEOPLE'S WAR TO WAR OF NEGOTIATIONS

The Vietnam war has changed. Graphs showing the intensity of fighting since the Tet offensive (Feb. '68) make it clear that battles and lulls in the fighting are planned to achieve various negotiations aims, and, eventually, a deal. Here are some examples:

> The winter 1968 Tet offensive, the Khesanh siege and the let-up of that siege, were all geared to achieving the preliminary talks that began in spring 1968.
>
> Full-fledged talks started in November 1968. Before these began, NLF/DRV leaders launched a number of highly sensational battles. Later we'll discuss how these battles were linked to turning points in the negotiations hassle.
>
> Since Nov. 1968, NLF/DRV leaders have mainly emphasized restraint. Thus the first post-Nov. '68 lull lasted 4 months! These lulls (2 years of lulls?) are intended to present a good image. This, the NLF/DRV leaders apparently hope, will pressure the U.S. to negotiate in good faith.
>
> Despite the lulls, various sensational, mini-Tets have been launched. Thus, as we discuss later, in March, 1969 an offensive was launched aimed at "criticizing" Nixon's current "get tough" policy. Another offensive was launched in 1969 to celebrate the formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (by the NLF and others). And so on. The main thing (especially this past year, including during the Cambodian invasion) has been the incredible lack of fighting in Vietnam.

Let's examine more thoroughly the relationship of fighting to talks starting in 1968. But let us state clearly from the outset our political conclusions. **The NLF/DRV leaders' approach completely undermines People's War. The strategy of the NLF/DRV leaders constitutes a terrible, criminal attack on Vietnamese -- on all! -- working people**.

Consider the siege at Khesanh. NLF/DRV troops had thousands trapped in this U.S. stronghold. Things were so tight that LBJ made his generals promise not to lose. And yet the siege was lifted after LBJ's "peace speech" in order to demonstrate Vietnamese leaders' sincerity.

That was how things went -- moves and counter-moves, like a chess game. In early May the preliminary talks actually started. To bolster their negotiating position, DRV/NLF leaders launched a second 1968 offensive. Thus the talks began in the week of highest U.S. casualties that year.

The third NLF/DRV offensive took place during the infamous 1968 Democratic Party convention in Chicago. That NLF/DRV offensive was meant to build support for McCarthy by embarrassing LBJ and Humphrey.

Or consider the other side of the coin: when NLF/DRV leaders thought a planned military offensive might harm talks, they pulled back. Thus around Christmas, 1968, the puppet ruler Thieu threatened to cease talks if the NLF carried out an offensive it was preparing for around Saigon. U.S. Paris negotiator Cyrus Vance warned the DRV of the same thing. (*N.Y. Times*, 12/22/68.) The NLF offensive never took place.

And again -- on April 10, 1969, the *N.Y. Times* reported that certain secret talks were bogged down. Sure enough, on April 12 the NLF launched a small offensive -- attacking 45 targets. Various categories of negotiational events called forth various levels of military action.

One could go on and on. Vietnamese leaders themselves have pretty much admitted their strategy:

> We are convinced that there can be **no better stimulation to promote the Paris talks** than repeated blows against the U.S. expeditionary corps, and we are acting accordingly. That is the way to bring back peace (Article from DRV "Communist" party press, signed "Victorious" and reprinted in *N.Y. Times*, 3/23/69; our emphasis).

FULL-FLEDGED TALKS -- ANOTHER RETREAT

Let's go briefly over the history of the negotiations maneuvers:

1966: Vietnamese leaders still upheld 4 points including total U.S. withdrawal as precondition for talks.

1967: 4 points dropped as precondition. Unconditional bombing halt new preconditions for talks.

Jan. 1968: Vietnamese leaders now said talks "will automatically follow" an unconditional bombing halt.

April; 1968: LBJ confined bombs to southern DRV. A sheer farce. DRV leaders scoffed, yet then agreed to preliminary talks aimed at achieving unconditional bombing halt.

On Nov. 1, 1968, a new page in this backsliding story was printed. LBJ announced that the long-sought "full-fledged" talks could begin. There would still be several months of haggling over table-shapes (!), but, in essence, this was the real thing. This wee what the NLF/DRV leaders had sought.

The DRV/NLF leaders had maintained (as of April, 1968) that full-fledged talks could not begin until an unconditional bombing halt was declared. One would suppose this was the basis of the agreement to begin these talks. One would be wrong. In fact, LBJ (who announced the talks) made it very clear the bombing halt and the talks were both highly conditional. So what was the condition? "Just" that NLF/DRV leaders not "take advantage" of the bomb halt or "escalate" the fight.

In order to get negotiations with U.S. Imperialism, these leaders had promised not to let the people fight too hard, to make sure People's War did not grow too strong, that it atrophied!

Shame! What a bitter betrayal.

And what a paradox. Consider. Just 9 months earlier the Vietnamese leaders had launched the life-squandering big Tet offensive. Its aim? To get negotiations. Now full scale talks would begin -- conditional on the leaders' promise not to launch big offensives.

But that's really no paradox. The adventurism of Tet and the opportunism of the November agreement not to "escalate" are all of a piece. They both fit a strategy of getting a deal with imperialism.

The U.S. government had plenty to celebrate. In the process of bringing about the negotiations, the NLF/DRV had led the world-wide anti-war movement away from anti-imperialism into the harmless call for "talks now." And -- their cup runneth over! -- now, even before the talks had begun, the U.S. rulers had a promise from DRV/ NLF leaders not to let things get out of hand**. A no-strike pledge with a vengeance.**

And, indeed, the Vietnamese leaders kept their word. They didn't launch an offensive for five months. When they did finally launch an offensive, newly-elected president Nixon warned them that such actions could jeopardize the "understanding" between DRV leaders and LBJ that had made the bombing halt possible. But as a *N.Y.Times* editorial pointed out to Nixon, the offensive really was no violation of the agreement. The U.S., not the NLF, was getting too pushy -- the NLF/DRV forces were only trying to discourage this risky U.S. approach. Nixon, the *Times* urged, should cut back his "search and destroy" missions. After all, noted the *Times*, hadn't the DRV pulled 20 regiments out of the south after the bomb-halt/negotiations agreement the preceding fall? Thus even this spring 1969 offensive was tied to the negotiations.

RELY ON WEAPONS/SQUANDER PEOPLE

In order to fight a war of negotiations, NLF/DRV leaders began stressing large troop concentrations and "conventional" military methods. General Giap -- who became an advocate of this approach -- stressed that this method puts special emphasis on high efficiency of all kinds of weapons and equipment. (Giap, *Big Victory, Great Task*, p. 54.) What had happened to the 3-stage People's War?

POLITICALLY -- Negotiations were not key. The goal was to get the "best" deal from imperialism. Tactics were geared to this. A military offensive was like a harsh diplomatic note.

STRATEGICALLY -- No more protracted approach. Reliance on weapons and expert skills replaced reliance on millions of working people.

What this means is that the guerilla character -- the mass based popular character of the war -- was more and more lost. It did not give way to the full-scale, millions-strong popular offensive of the final stage of People's War -- it was just plain lost. The people, not yet fully mobilized, were no longer viewed as key. They were squandered for effect. At one time, even the U.S. agent Douglas Pike had had to admit that:

The rural Vietnamese was not regarded (by the NLF) simply as a pawn in a power struggle, but as the active element in the thrust. He **was** the thrust.

This was no longer true.

> U.S. officials saw this soon. They were overjoyed:
>
> The enemy has virtually abandoned guerrilla tactics to fight a nearly conventional war. This has made less important the admitted weaknesses of U.S. and Government (Saigon puppet) troops in fighting guerrillas ... Present American military doctrine is still not well suited to fight guerrillas, many critics argue. In recent months, however, these same critics have begun to feel such faults are less important ... "Hell," said one young American with field experience, "We lost the guerrilla war in 1964. I admit that. But this is now a new war and we could win it." (*New York Times*, 1/3/69)

Another U.S. officer said:

> "The men who attacked the U.S. Embassy (in Saigon during Tet, 1968) never showed any indication of wanting to surrender ... They were brave men. But they are dead now and you don't replace that kind of man easily." (*New York Times*, 1/3/69.

But the men who died at the embassy weren't just "brave individuals." They were dedicated revolutionaries. Thousands of the best, most experienced rank and file leaders were slaughtered during Tet. When you think about that -- not only from the viewpoint of human life thrown away, but when you consider that these revolutionaries were steeled in many years of class struggle -- it takes a long time for the people to bring forward such leaders. And for thousands of revolutionaries to die -- for a negotiating tactic!

What a terrible waste.

When we say the DRV/NLF leaders' negotiations strategy is a betrayal, this is not just talk**. It is a crime to squander the lives of working people, revolutionaries in this way.**

Vietnamese workers and peasants will not tolerate such leaders very long.

How much this terrible strategy has undermined the vast NLF base of fighting support is clear from the past year of fighting. The war merely drags on now, on and on, not allowed to develop because negotiations are key: the People's War stagnates. The NLF can, of course, go on quite some time in this way. Years were spent building a vast base of support.

This is now a war of attrition. But the oppressed never won by waiting out the rulers. And especially not when, at any time, they may be asked to die simply in order to insult a U.S. Paris negotiator or show Nixon that his shape table is unacceptable.

Next section: Russia, Revisionism And Vietnam

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RUSSIA, REVISIONISM AND VIETNAM

Why have the Vietnamese leaders abandoned People's War?

An important part of the explanation lies with Soviet political influence. NLF/DRV leaders look to the Russian regime for ideological guidance.

To understand the significance of Soviet influence in Vietnam we should consider the class character of the Russian state. There was a great socialist revolution in Russia over 50 years ago. For the first time, as a result of this earth-shaking struggle, the working class seized power. This revolution, led by the Russian Bolsheviks (Communists) headed by V. I. Lenin is a vast treasure-house of experience and theory for workers and students who want to fight this system.

But the Russia revolution has been reversed. Workers no longer run things in the land of the soviets. Now the state is controlled -- just as the U.S. government is run -- by a handful of capitalists, a small group of billionaires who oppress most people. Russia is now no longer socialist. It's a capitalist country. (Space prevents us from discussing this point further. For more on this, read the PLP book, *Revolution USA*).

Nowhere is the anti-worker character of the Russian regime made clearer than in its foreign police. An example is Indonesia. After pro-U.S. fascists slaughtered 500,000 workers, peasants and reds, the Soviets moved in and bailed these mass murderers out of financial difficulties and granted extensive military aid.

Soviet foreign policy, like U.S. foreign policy, has two aims: a) making money (thus they dabble in Mideast oil-politics), and b) suppressing revolutionary communism. (In many instances, Russian agents have cooperated with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency to smash guerrilla forces.)

Stopping revolutionary communism -- that is the aim of the Russian government in Southeast Asia.

During the past decade the once-admired Soviet Union has become a notorious and hated enemy of working class forces around the world. For anyone to say that this anti-revolutionary force has achieved communism -- the stage of socialist development where all class distinctions are gone -- this would be like saying that U.S. forces in south Vietnam constituted a Red Army. Nevertheless the *Vietnam Courier* (an official DRV publication) has no shame:

> Since the end of the war (W.W. II), the Soviet people (which means: the Soviet government) have recorded tremendous achievements... and completed the building of **socialism and are successfully laying the material and technical foundations of communism**. (*Vietnam Courier*, 11/7/69, our emphasis).

And in the same issue:

> On the occasion of the 52nd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Vietnamese people ... wish that under the leadership of the CPSU the Soviet people will record ever greater and more brilliant successes in the building of material and technical bases of communism and in the **struggle for world peace and the independence of nations!** (*ibid*., our emphasis).

The Vietnamese leaders glorify this right-wing regime. They say it's a great socialist -- almost classless -- state. Either Vietnamese leaders are crazy -- and they're not crazy -- or else something is very, very wrong.

But perhaps the Vietnamese leaders just respect the Russians on paper. Maybe it's just nostalgia on their part, nostalgia for the once-revolutionary Russia of years ago. In what practical ways do Vietnamese leaders back Russian counter-revolutionary politics?

First of all, statements like the two quoted above are of great practical use to the Russian rulers. Praise from the Vietnamese provides a handy "red" cover for the Soviet skunks. It covers their stink. It gives these counter-revolutionaries an undeserved lease on life.

Second, NLF/DRV leaders do give the Russians forthright practical help. Thus when the Russian rulers invaded Czechoslovakia, only two "non-Soviet bloc" regimes backed them. One was Cuba. The other was the DRV.

It is well known that Russian political influence was used to help persuade NLF/DRV leaders to substitute negotiations for People's War. Of course, this pleases U.S. leaders. Because of this and other Soviet "good deeds," U.S. rulers are getting very cozy with their Soviet counterparts. A reporter asked Nixon the following question:

> ... you said in the recent past that you thought the U.S. might put some pressure or use the Soviet Union**, to seek to enlist the Soviet Union's help in Vietnam**, and (have you tried to do this?) (our emphasis)

Nixon answered:

> Mr. Lisagor, as you know, the Soviet Union is in a very delicate and very sensitive position as far as Vietnam is concerned. I do not divulge any confidences from the Soviet Ambassador in indicating that this is the case ... what the Soviet Union does in the Vietnamese conflict is a very difficult decision for them as related to (their objective of) ... leadership for the Communist world. On the other hand, it is well known that the Soviet Union was helpful in terms of getting the Paris peace talks started ... And I think I could say that, based on the conversations that the Secretary of State and I have had with the Soviet Ambassador, I believe at this time that **the Soviet Union shares the concerns of many other nations in the world about the extension of the war in Vietnam, its continuing ... What it can do, however, is something that only the Soviet Union would be able to answer privately, not publicly.** (*New York Times*, 3/5/69, our emphasis).

GIVE THEM ENOUGH AID AND THEY'LL HANG THEMSELVES

An important source of Soviet political influence in the DRV and NLF is their material support. That aid is tremendous.

With any aid there comes political influence. This is a very important fact of political life. Some think you can fool the Soviet leaders, or the U.S. government. "You can slyly take their goodies -- and use this money to support the very things these oppressors hate." Those who try this can only trick themselves. First, aid makes it very hard to attack those who do the giving. Among other things, the aid might be withdrawn. And also, getting aid softens your

attitude towards those who give it. In Vietnam, Russian aid considerably warmed the hearts of militants who started out hostile toward Soviet leaders while unclear about what was wrong with them politically. Second, aid increases the political strength of those within the given movement who agree with the giver. Third, aid, especially military aid, creates dependence on the giver for more aid.

Here is a related example of this strategy in action:

> (After the U.S. had made a request, the) Soviet Union had been of some help in the North, Vietnamese ... the officials said they believed the Russians had **withheld some material support from the North Vietnamese** and had urged Hanoi to use political rather than military means to gain its objectives American officials said the Soviet Union did not appear to be enthusiastic about the North Vietnamese operations in Laos because success for Hanoi might open up opportunities for greater Chinese Communist influence in Laos. (*New York Times*, 10/31/69, our emphasis)

WHAT THE SOVIETS WANT IN VIETNAM

The Soviet leaders have at least three important aims in Vietnam. First - they want to build up even better relations with the U.S. Again, this is pretty well known. Even Nixon, the old Russia hater, is moved by this new-found love:

So our attitude toward the Soviets is not a high-handed one of trying to tell them that you do this or we won't talk. Our attitude is very conciliatory, and I must say that in our talks with the Soviet Ambassador I think that they were thinking along this line too. (*New York Times* 3/5/69.)

Second, as an imperialist power with needs like those of U.S. imperialism, the Soviet government wants to be "in on" the plunder of Asia. Thus, the Soviets have a somewhat competitive relationship with the U.S. But both the U.S. and Soviet governments realize that their main enemy is revolution. Both governments are absolute enemies of the working class. Third, and most important, the Russians want to defeat revolutionary communism in China.

> Officials count on Soviet support in arranging a settlement. They think that Moscow would favor a compromise that would vindicate neither U.S. intervention in Vietnam nor the guerrilla warfare habitually endorsed by Communist China. (*New York Times*, 4/6/69)

And they aren't just thinking about the immediate future; they're thinking far beyond. Another *Times* article noted that many DRV leaders are politically pro-Russian and that this will help the Soviet government because:

> As it develops its Asian policy after the end of the war in Vietnam, Moscow has made it clear that it is striving to counter the political and economic incursions of China. (*New York Times* 10/27/69.)

So while the Soviet imperialists' desire to exploit Asian workers will mean growing friction with U.S. imperialism, Russian leaders' goals of reversing the Chinese revolution can only lead to greater imperialist unity. The U.S. government has always wanted Vietnam to be a bastion against workers' power in China. Indeed, this is what's behind the negotiations. In history there are many examples of movements changing sharply -- being transformed politically

into their opposites. Thus the socialist revolution in Russia has been totally reversed--and tragically the People's War in Vietnam is now being reversed.

The U.S. hopes the negotiations will help bring about tremendous changes in Vietnam. The talks are clearly negating People's War. Soviet political prestige has been greatly increased. Negotiations, the transformation of People's War into war-to-influence-negotiations, and increasing Soviet political influence, all help isolate revolutionary communists in Vietnam, confuse those in the middle, and strengthen the hand of sellouts among the leadership. (We are sure this is only temporary!) The U.S. leaders hope that the combination of maintaining the war and at the same time negotiating, will at the very least help guarantee that the DRV and any future coalition regime in the south (assuming one results from the talks) become Yugoslav-type governments: pro-U.S. and pro-Soviet ,completely opposed to revolutionary working class power.

"Hawk" politicians tend to be somewhat conservative in their approach on this, that is, cautious about moving too fast -- just as, earlier, Johnson wanted to hold out for a little more before starting talks. "Doves" like the openly racist Senator Fulbright are bolder. Thus in an April, 1970 Senate speech, Fulbright criticized Nixon for moving so slowly to consummate the deal. After all, this racist argued, north Vietnamese control of southeast Asia is an excellent way of containing the influence of revolutionary forces in China. '

The Soviet imperialists have more than 30 divisions of troops. poised at the Chinese border. Their U.S. imperialist counter-parts are fighting against working people in several Asian countries -- including Cambodia. U.S. and Russian rulers are putting together the forces for an anti-Chinese communism crusade -- should this prove necessary. That means there could well be a huge war involving China vs. Russia and the U.S. Imperialist "peace" In Vietnam, with the U.S. and the Russians holding onto bases in a now -- "pacified" Vietnam (a Vietnam closely linked politically with the Russian rulers) -- such "peace" could well precede an all-Asia war.

WHAT IS REVISIONISM?

We discussed the effects of Russian aid to Vietnam earlier in this chapter. We called that section

GIVE THEM ENOUGH AID AND THEY'LL HANG THEMSELVES. By using this title, we did not mesh to imply that Vietnamese leaders are being forced to sell out. Nobody made them accept Russian aid in the first place. They are very experienced people, very sophisticated politically. So they were very well aware that no aid comes without strings attached. Therefore the leaders in Vietnam, and not the Russians, are the main ones responsible for the sellout strategy of negotiations for taking the "people" out of "People's War

The DRV/NLF leadership is dominated by revisionists. We are not just using the term "revisionist" as a curse, and it's not, as anti communists say, a word "dogmatic" Marxist-Leninists use to castigate their more "creative" brothers. In every revolutionary movement, forces develop from within that oppose the movement's basic aims. This has happened time and again within the world communist movement. Thus "revisionists" are those who call themselves communists but who in practice strip communism of its revolutionary working-class character.

In order to have a better understanding of this let's first consider what revolutionary communists are after.

SOCIALISM MEANS WORKERS' RULE!

The goal of communists is to lead the working class to seize and hold state power to serve the needs of working

people. It is impossible to "sneak this in the back door." Socialism can be achieved only by the revolutionary action of millions of workers and their supporters.

The capitalist class, or bourgeoisie, which now runs things, owns the means of production -- factories, mines and mills. But workers do all the work. Without the working class nothing can move -- they produce everything, transport everything. And they are sharply exploited and oppressed right at the point of capitalist production.

Because they're always getting shafted, workers fight back daily many ways. Sometimes they win, sometimes they lose. But always, when push comes to shove, the government is in there fighting for the capitalists, the owners.

Chase Manhattan has a friend in The White House.

Thus, in building toward the goal of working class revolution, reds realize the crucial necessity of exposing present capitalist governments -- like the Russian regime (it claims to be socialist)or the U.S. regime (it claims to be everything) as workers' bitterest enemies. Whatever their size or shape, regardless of whether they're headed up by "nice doves" or by the "meanest hawks" it makes no difference. They're controlled by giant banks and corporations. They can't be reformed. The capitalist class -- which these governments serve -- must squeeze everything out of the workers or it will die. So the main task of their governments is to preserve their profits. Owners' profits mean workers; losses. That's why these governments must defeat workers' movements that threaten the bosses.

Thus the capitalists use their vast state machine to try to reverse every gain workers make and smash workers' movements -- to turn everything to their advantage, to profit from the people's suffering. They use their vast network of newspapers, radio and TV stations, and the schools they control to back them up and divide the People -- by spreading racism, for example. Thus we are really living under a class dictatorship -- a dictatorship of the rich parasites over the working people. And it is am, urgent practical task, a life and death question for hundreds of millions: the international working class must smash the bosses' governments and build a whole new society, here in this country and all over the world, which will deprive the rich of every drop of power.

The fact that PL urges workers to take the long view, to build for socialist revolution, doesn't mean we're against day-to-day struggles. The point is to link these everyday fights to socialist revolution, to make them an important part of the struggle for workers' rule. Thus we take part in and help build struggles in every phase of life, in every place the rich oppress the people -- from the army, to the factories, to the schools. These fights can win real improvements, and we fight for that, but we also go further. We try to approach these reform fights -- because that's what they are, fights to make some changes, to win some relatively minor gains -- we try to approach these day-to-day struggles from a revolutionary communist standpoint, with a revolutionary communist spirit. This means using every struggle to expose the government's divisive influence, to unify workers and their allies while smashing the government's pro-bees ideas and practices -- like racism against black, Chicano, Chinese or Puerto Rican people -- and exposing the capitalists and their government as workers' bitter enemy. **While helping organize the people to fight back, it's vital for reds to point out how every aspect of life under capitalism provides living proof: workers must smash the bourgeois state and set up one run by and for the working class. The job of reds is to help involve millions of workers in creating a vast school of communist education** -- out of capitalist society itself. Led by the revolutionary communist party, workers must study every phase of capitalist life -- of the class struggle -- to learn to make socialist revolution. This study can't be done Just through books. The main "research" has to be done outside, in real life, in the very midst of all the oppression, the corruption, and the magnificent and growing class struggle.

That's what it means to link everyday reform struggles to fighting for socialist revolution. That's what it means to imbue even minor fights with the spirit of revolutionary workers' rule, to make them Part of the process of

establishing workers' power.

This can't be done by isolated communists, each operating on his own. For just as the bosses have their state machine, working people need a "general staff" of their own -- dedicated to serving the people, rooted in everyday struggles, learning from the people and heading the revolutionary socialist fight -- a party to help show the way and show, every hard step of the way, how each vicious act by the U.S. government points to the need for workers' rule.

This, in essence, is what the revolutionary communists stand for.

Power to the workers.

WHAT DO THE REVISIONISTS STAND FOR?

We explained earlier that revisionists cut the revolutionary guts out of communism. To justify this they pose as great fighters for reforms. This claim is a lie.

Revisionists "struggle" for reforms in a profoundly anti-revolutionary way -- with a million ties to "liberal sections of the ruling class" on whom they rely, advocating an approach of wheeling and dealing with 'friends at the top" and "leaving it to experts" instead of mass struggle. They try to mislead the mass movement into fighting for the wrong changes, in the wrong way -- and if, despite them, things go forward, they switch tactics and (praising themselves for what the people have done despite them) urge a sellout solution. And all the while they build on the anti-worker ideas people learn from capitalist society -- like racism and nationalism, or like solving problems through drugs. If nevertheless, real mass-based struggles develop overwhelming strength, they fight desperately for a non-revolutionary solution -- something other than workers' rule -- and do their best to keep things from advancing. In this way, they act to kill the movement with stagnation, since that which stands still dies. (**For more on revisionism, see Appendix II, at end of this pamphlet**).

What does this mean in terms of Vietnam? For we've said the Vietnamese movement is now led by revisionists.

REVISIONISM IN VIETNAM

Socialism is just as crucial a goal in Vietnam as everywhere else. Unless state power is held firmly by revolutionary workers and poor peasants, the imperialists will regain their hold. Thus Vietnamese working people must be won to transform the independence fight into a fight for socialism. Instead, the so-called 'communist" leaders of this movement have made socialism a rarely-mentioned, never-explained, basically hollow and far-off goal.

Of course it follows that the south Vietnamese PRP or "communist" party does not right for socialism. Instead it functions as they key leadership of the independence struggle of the NLF.

The revisionism of these "communist" leaders is clear from the history of the struggle. These misleaders sold out the fight in 1954, turning over half the country to U.S. rule. They told the poor peasants and workers to rely on imperialist-run elections and not to fight back. All through the '50s they urged the fighters to take on U.S. imperialism unarmed. When the movement reached a high point, around 1966-1967, they tried to resolve things by going backward -- moving the struggle away from total U.S. withdrawal (not to mention socialism) into a "fight" for negotiations. And now, under their mis-leadership, the People's War stagnates.

For a period of time, in the first half of the Sixties, it's true that the Vietnamese leaders helped build the NLF. But all the while, the revisionists among them were pushing ideas -- like nationalism, all-class unity, relying on U.S. "dove" politicians and other illusions -- reactionary ideas that have now allowed them to reverse the fight. Thus, with a vast base for People's War build up, these "reds" are squandering the militant base of support, using anti-imperialist workers as poker chips at the bargaining table. The demand for immediate withdrawal has been sold out. This is how revisionists, for all their talk about fighting for reforms, actually sabotage reform struggles.

Let's look at the wrong ideas, the illusions that the Vietnamese leaders have pushed:

ILLUSION #1: NATIONALISM -- Nationalism teaches that the most important ties are those that bind the people of one nation -- workers and bosses alike. NLF/DRV leaders are extreme nationalists. They talk all the time about a "war of national salvation" to "free the fatherland" from foreign aggression. But the main thing about the war -- that it's a class war on a world scale -- is hidden by the leaders.

Nationalism says that "all Vietnamese are brothers" and shouldn't "hassle over divisive theories." (Similarly, various nationalist forces in the U.S. also try to repress the left by appealing to "unity" -- under the nationalists' leadership, of course.) But the ruling ideology in capitalist society -- including Vietnam -- is pro-capitalist ideology.

Unless these ideas are sharply beaten in the people's movement, capitalist forces will win. Defeating capitalist ideas requires a lot of "haggling" over how -- in theory and practice -- to serve working people. Thus this "stop the haggling" bit means: let enemy ideas rule the people's movement.

Nationalism views all "members" of the oppressor nation as enemies regardless of class. Based on this wrong view, Vietnamese leaders make almost no attempt to win over U.S. GIs. Nevertheless, these soldiers are mainly working class, and many are black. They're almost all anti-war. They rebel time and again. he U.S. army has great revolutionary potential. And NLF leaders could speed up the process. Careful work would have to be done, putting forth a working class line. But they hardly ever even issue a leaflet.

Many heroic struggles for independence have been reversed by nationalism. A tragic example is Indonesia. Another is Algeria. The Algerians fought a magnificent war against French imperialism. It ended with France officially "out." Then Algerian capitalists took over, since "we're all brothers." These nationalists brought French capitalists back in -- with the Algerian nationalist leaders serving as the "cover." The Algerian working people are really worse off than ever. After all that fighting, they are saddled with the once-"revolutionary," now-just-plain-capitalist-nationalists. They thought they'd dumped one master. But they got back two.

Of course, many working people have nationalist ideas. But that's no reason for communists to build these ideas. And if communists fight in their practical, day-to-day work, for the necessity of workers' seizing power, they will have to fight "patriotic" ideas. For the rulers will use these very ideas to fight the reds.

In Vietnam the "communists" are the "best" nationalists.

ILLUSION # 2: ALL-CLASS UNITY -- This idea is closely related to nationalism. It is a vividly practical result of the nationalist outlook. After all, nationalism teaches that people of nation share unbreakable bonds. There is an ancient proverb: "Better to be kicked by one of the family than to be befriended by outsiders." The NLF and the Provisional Revolutionary Government (led by the NLF) constantly refer to forming a coalition government "reflecting national concord and the broad union of all social strata." Thus one PRG revolutionary calls for a regime to:

encourage industrial trading bourgeoisie to contribute to the development of industry, small industry and handcrafts (*Proceedings of the South Vietnamese Congress of People's Representatives*: p. 35)

And in the same resolution, they note that

Industrialists and traders are entitled to freedom of enterprise, and to resist any oppressive competition by foreign monopoly capital. (Ibid.)

This means that not only will there be a flourishing development of "domestic" capitalism, but "foreign" capitalism will be allowed. (They just aren't supposed to commit excesses against "domestic" capitalists; but everything a capitalist does excessively shafts workers.) This is not a good approach.

ILLUSION # 3: U.S. IMPERIALISM AND OTHER CAPITALIST REGIMES AREN'T THE DEADLY AND PERMANENT ENEMY OF ALL WORKING PEOPLE -- Every time the leaders made a deal, Vietnamese working people got shafted. This happened in 1945. A cease-fire was used by the French to build up troop-strength in the French-Indochinese war. It happened again in 1954, with the U.S. using the Geneva deal as a cover for taking over the south. Nor have the present negotiations made the U.S. government act any "nicer" in Vietnam. But the Vietnamese leaders are going further this time. They're advocating "working together" with U.S. imperialism after the war. Thus we are told:

[A key PRG aim is] to establish diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with all countries, including the U.S., irrespective of political and social regime, . . .to accept aid with no political strings attached, from any country, in terms of capital, technique, and specialized services. (Ibid., p. 57)

This is like Algeria all over again.

When you think about it, the Nixon administration certainly is cautious. What threat does such a program hold for U.S. imperialism?

And this program is not just words on paper. Vietnamese peasants and workers are being mobilized behind this complete sellout of their class interests.

The NLF/DRV goes on to urge a foreign policy of "peaceful coexistence" and "neutrality." There is no discussion of the need for all workers and oppressed people to fight to overthrow their oppressors. The U.S. government is attacking working people all over the world with the most bitter fighting, perhaps, in Vietnam itself -- and these guys talk about "peaceful coexistence?! And what sort of neutrality is possible in a class-divided world? Who can be neutral in fact?

Nobody can. If you stand aside you side with the status quo, you oppose workers. What an immense betrayal -- not just of the Vietnamese but of all oppressed people. And what a terrible example to other movements.

And a year ago, Kiem, an NLF Paris negotiator, told the press that the NLF is "looking forward" to normal and friendly economic and diplomatic relations with the U.S. after the war. (N.Y. Times, 5/26/69)

Looking through the PRG and NLF documents, we could find no mention of the U.S. imperialist attempt to encircle

China. There is also no mention of the Russian border raids against China -- border raids backed up by the best troops in the Russian army. Keep in mind U.S./Soviet attempts to crush the Chinese socialist revolution. Keep in mind also these imperialists' desire to use the Vietnamese to help do this. In that context, these omissions concerning Vietnam's giant next-door neighbor are very serious indeed.

A BRIEF SURVEY OF WHAT HAPPENED IN VIETNAM

Here in our estimate is an outline of what happened in Vietnam since 1954, from the standpoint of what revisionists have done:

1954-1960: The DRV dragged its heels, implicitly discouraging the development of People's war. Remnants of the old Vietminh probably did a lot of hard political work and the working people fought despite the DRV.

1960-1965: The DRV leaders belatedly "approved" the struggle. They aided in forming the NLF. People's War developed strongly, knocking the hell out of U.S. imperialism.

1965-1968: When People's War defeated the U.S. government's attempted "special war," the U.S. imperialists invaded heavily, and began bombing the DRV. The DRV leaders brought the north in, also heavily. Why? First, to help combat the huge troop build-up. Second, and most important, to take more direct political leadership of the war. Those who'd been carrying on People's War for ten years in the south were less "reliable." Revisionist leadership within the NLF was thus bolstered.

From '65 to '68, People's War grew in intensity., By '68 the popular base in south Vietnam was gigantic. The DRV/NLF revisionists had been vastly bolstered by Soviet aid and influence. Now that they could better wage the internal struggle against more left-wing forces, the DRV/NLF leaders switched to the "reckless" line of the Tet. This was really just a negotiations ploy, as were the few later offensives. The later period has seen negotiations demoralize and squander the lives of the revolutionary working people.

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Examining this history, we were puzzled by something. Many of those who died during Tet must have been the most left-wing, the most firmly revolutionary. That stands to reason. Many of them must have been tremendously experienced as well. It was surely obvious to these people that Tet had no hope of becoming a successful general counter-offensive, that "stage three" of People's War was still far ahead. Why then did they fight?

The only answer we could think of was: nationalism. To many of these people, steeled in years of struggle, rooted deeply in the masses of working people -- to many it was surely clear that this would fail. Only an unwillingness to go against "their brothers" -- the revisionists who were squandering workers' and peasants' lives in a chess game with imperialism -- can explain what they did.

The Vietnamese working people are learning from these mistakes. When the masses of politically aware workers and peasants fully grasp these lessons, they will be able to fight back harder than ever before.

Next Section: Conclusion -- Drive The U.S. Out Of Asia! Build Internationalism! Fight For Workers' Power

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CONCLUSION -- Drive the U.S. Out of Asia!

Build Internationalism!

Fight for Workers' Power

Karl Marx, the great founder of the communist movement, wrote 125 years ago that until then

> philosophers had only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it. (Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*).

That's just as true today as it was then. As a revolutionary communist organization, the Progressive Labor Party is not interested in studying Vietnam -- or anything else -- just for the sake of knowledge. What's happening in Vietnam is a burning question for working people all over the world, and therefore for reds. We have to understand mistakes that are being made in order to warn ourselves and other militant and revolutionary workers and their allies against repeating those mistakes. And we must learn from Vietnam the lessons of People's War, learn how best to smash all the bosses.

What kind of anti-war movement should be built? As we've said, some are willing to accept any sort of movement to bring about any kind of peace: "just given peace a chance." These people supported the NLF/DRV leaders' and liberal imperialists' call for "peace" talks. But, as we said five years ago when "stop the bombing and negotiate" was first pushed as a slogan by "official" anti-war leaders, this is the wrong way to oppose the Vietnam war. Vietnam is a class war, not a tragic blunder. U.S. imperialism launched this attack on Vietnamese working people because it wants to control all of southeast Asia in order to make more money. Either the imperialists and their local stooges run things, or working people do. How can oppressed and oppressors share power? What does it mean to say Vietnamese working people and U.S. imperialists should "get together and work out a solution that's OK for both sides?" It means recognizing what the imperialists have claimed all along -- that, somehow, U.S. rulers have the right to decide the future of the Vietnamese.

As we have seen, the U.S. went into Vietnam for the same reason that a bank takes back your car, for the same reason that a thief steals your furniture. The reason has nothing to do with justice. The thief wanted something and figured he had the power to take it.

Which means the U.S. has as much right to "talk turkey" about Vietnam as a robber in another person's house. Get that robber out of the house now.

A section of the anti-war movement -- the Moratorium and Mobilization Committees, which ran last year's big moratorium and demonstrations, and which are themselves controlled by Trotskyite-revisionist "dove" political coalition -- actively backs negotiations. To the extent that some honest people follow these guys, this has weakened the movement. Other decent anti-war forces have been demoralized by this stand of their "leaders." Nevertheless, a real anti-imperialist movement is being built against the war. The PLP as well as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and other forces are helping build this movement.

Consider for a moment the logic of the right-wing "peace movement" leaders' stand. The negotiations these guys support are reversing the People's War. In the short term, that means imperialism can consolidate Vietnam as a bastion

for expanding the war throughout southeast Asia on terms favorable to imperialism -- with Vietnam as a stable rear. Imagine the future of an anti-war movement led by the "hurrah for negotiations" crowd. Every time the U.S. rulers attacked a new area -- bombed, sent troops in, or produced some prefabricated "democratic leaders" to ask for imperialist help -- this "anti-war movement" could beg for "peace" talks. Perhaps the leaders of such a movement could someday get good jobs in the U.S. empire. They'd deserve some reward.

Despite the "official" (which really means: government recognized) "peace leaders," despite these misleaders there is only one just settlement. The U.S. must get out of southeast Asia, 100 percent, no strings, right now.

But at this point, demanding immediate withdrawal is not enough. An anti-imperialist movement must say something about the all-too-real fact: negotiations are going on. We in PL (and many others) see these talks as a serious betrayal by NLF/DRV leaders. We've discussed this at length previously. We know that some honest anti-imperialists disagree with or are unsure about this view. But whether you think the negotiations are a sellout by NLF/DRV leaders, or think they're making a mistake, or whatever one might say -- the fact remains: negotiations are taking place and the U.S. has no right to negotiate! So whatever one says about the Vietnamese leaders, an anti-imperialist movement must say: "There is nothing to negotiate. U.S. get out NOW!" If the movement is silent about this glaring fact it will end up supporting the imperialists' right to "talk turkey" about somebody else's turkey.

"DOVE" POLITICIANS ARE BIRDS OF PREY

There are only two forces in this country -- indeed in the world -- with real power. One is then working class. The other is the big business class.

Any movement, including the anti-war movement, has to rely on one of these forces.

The right-wing "official peace movement" leaders urge us to back "dove" politicians. Does that mean allying with workers or imperialists?

Let's take a look at two "doves" -- Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern.

Consider McCarthy. He boasted that his presidential campaign was aimed at "getting the kids off the streets" and back within the system. As we saw earlier, he made clear he was against "deserting" Vietnam to workers' and peasants' rule. He supported and voted for:

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution;

Every extension of the draft;

The Student Loyalty Oath Bill in 1959;

The oil depletion allowances;

Backed Truman's Korean War actions all the way;

He opposed and voted against:

Withholding federal aid from segregated schools;

Minimum wage coverage for one million low-wage workers.

Not that voting the other way around would show he was good -- the point is this "dove" politician has an openly anti-worker history, going way back. He was never against imperialism. He never questioned that the U.S. should maintain and expand political and economic control around the world. He merely thought that sellouts could be relied on somewhat more and naked force somewhat less. Thus he said: "The U.S. must have a policy in the Mideast based on America's interest . . ." (Quoted from "McCarthy for President" literature).

Or consider the current favorite among "dove" politicians -- Senator McGovern. He is an active racist who believes in using both the carrot and the stick to keep black and other working people down. Wielding the stick, he voted for the "Long Amendments" to the so-called "Civil Rights Act of 1968. " These amendments are "riot" control laws, carrying up to 5 years and $ 10,000 fine for various acts aimed at inciting rebellion. Such laws have classically been used to railroad left-wing organizers. At the same time, the public-relations purpose is to convince white workers that black rebellions are created by a few crazy outside agitators stirring up otherwise content black people.

On his more "carroty" or "dovish" domestic side, McGovern backed a "nice guy" bill for "recruiting, training and paying neighborhood youths to assist the police in community relations." Such measures are justified by liberals as a way of "improving police." But the real aim is to trap working class kids into covering for police actions against the working class, thus giving the rulers' sate more of a popular "cover." This is like so-called pacification programs the U.S. uses in Vietnam.

The same could be said for Fulbright -- whose record for racist positions is notorious. All these liberal "dove" senators are racist, anti-worker pro-imperialists. They want to do what the U.S. rulers need done in Vietnam in a less obvious way.

Allying with these "dove" politicians means supporting the smiling face imperialism presents to anti-war forces. But whether its smiling "McGovernment" or frowning "Gagnews" -- it means joining forces with imperialism.

The alternative is to ally with workers. That means linking the struggles of all working people in this country against the ruling class to the fight of Southeast Asian working people to drive the U.S. out, fighting all attempts by the rulers to turn workers against one another at home and abroad, building a vast united movement of workers of all countries and

their allies to first drive imperialism out of one position after another and then, in the end, smash it completely.

But more on this when we discuss PL's program. Before we get to that, let's take a look at the invasion of Cambodia and the position of Prince Sihanouk.

U.S. OUT OF ASIA!

We've been referring to the need to drive the U.S. out of Vietnam throughout this pamphlet. But at present the question is really broader, for the U.S. has expanded the war. For a long time fighting's been going on in Laos and Thailand. And now the U.S. has made a big play for Cambodia. This further demonstrates the predatory character of U.S. imperialism. U.S. rulers need to swallow everything, to have all working people under their thumb. We would like

make four points about Cambodia:

> The U.S. has no right to an inch of Cambodian land, no right to exploit a single Cambodian worker or peasant. U.S. rulers have no right to negotiate **anything** -- they must get out of Cambodia now! Since the imperialists aren't about to change into friends of the people, this means: **working people of the world must drive the U.S. rulers out of Cambodia!**
>
> The invasion of Cambodia showed how low NLF/DRV leaders have sunk. By launching a vast counter-offensive, uniting movements in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and southern Vietnam, the NLF/DRV leaders could have turned the U.S. attack around, and completely isolated the U.S. rulers. Instead, only minor token battles took place. The Vietnamese leaders are so tied to negotiations they are unwilling to rock the boat even in the face of extreme imperialist escalation.
>
> The fact that Nixon decided to invade Cambodia at all shows how poorly he's doing. He is even more a mess than LBJ, who set the previous record. He's got noting to offer the people except more problems. "Nixon's administration has proved more inept than others because the contradictions of imperialism are greater than ever. Nixon and company vacillate between more and less repression, tight and loose money, between trying to win the war militarily and resolving the 'peace' talks in a deal. His administration is trying to hold imperialism together with a few piano strings." (*PL Magazine*, September, 1970, p. 5)
>
> In the context of the DRV/NLF leaders' absolute failure to use the opportunity provided by the invasion to rally millions of working people around the world to launch and support the fight to drive the U.S. out of the entire area -- in the context of the sellouts' business-as-usual approach, Sihanouk has emerged as a "revolutionary force." Sihanouk, a Cambodian prince, was Cambodia's dictator until the U.S. had him thrown out. A long-term wheeler-dealer -- with definite ties to the CIA -- Sihanouk has maintained power and made himself rich by using his position as ruler of Cambodia to play imperialist and anti-imperialist forces off against each other. For years, this international playboy has been hunting down and trying to slaughter anti-imperialist fighters. He is a criminal plain and simple.

In early 1970, Sihanouk wrote an article for a liberal Paris paper, which made his politics pretty clear. In that article, he:

> Opposed communism and workers' rule;
>
> Offered a plan for U.S. and Japanese imperialism to secure a foothold in Southeast Asia.;
>
> Made right-wing attacks on the People's Republic of China.

On his way back from Moscow last spring (he'd been "talking Turkey" with Soviet rulers) Sihanouk figured out that the U.S. was planning a coup to throw him out. His response? Until the coup actually took place, Sihanouk argued that no coup was needed -- he'd moved as far right as was necessary! As soon as he'd been dethroned this "principled democrat" discovered he was an anti-imperialist. He called for driving U.S. imperialism out of the area. But that's not where Sihanouk's interests lie. He made this clear in the article mentioned earlier:

> If the Americans failed to find the new solution presently sought by President Nixon and consequently withdrew completely from Southeast Asia (all of which appears

> doubtful), the system of checks and balances that has worked up until now would no longer be viable and we would probably have to opt for China, becoming her unwilling satellite. (Prince Sihanouk, "Ideas That Change the World," *Preuves*, Second Quarter, 1970: translated in *PL Magazine*, Sept, 1970: 29)

In other words, Sihanouk's present posture is just another maneuver. He's playing games with the people. Like all bourgeois nationalists, Sihanouk needs the people as a wedge. To get the best deal from imperialism, he needs to wield the people, like a stick, in his own bourgeois interests. He ought to be tried for murder, not praised as a great revolutionary. Cambodian workers and peasants need this Murderer-Prince the way U.S. workers need more bosses.

A lot of pressure is being exerted to get Cambodian anti-imperialists to accept this anti-Communist's leadership. There is evidence that at least some sections of the movement there are resisting that pressure. The only solution in Cambodia and everywhere else, is to drive imperialism out and build workers' and peasants' rule.

Now let us examine the Progressive Labor Party's program, on a broader basis.

> The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement . . . . In all these movements, they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time . . . . The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE! (Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto*).

FIGHT FOR WORKING CLASS DEMANDS!

Here, in brief, is PL's approach to fighting against oppression on a day-to-day basis:

FIRST, THE LABOR MOVEMENT. We see workers -- especially in basic industry, transportation and communications -- as key. Workers' conditions are deteriorating all the time. (See articles in **PL Magazine**, Sept, 1970). One aspect of this is that the U.S. ruling class has taken control of the unions, whose leaders constantly act to crush workers' struggles. Workers recognize this in many cases, and thus an increasingly popular tactic used by workers is the wildcat strike. Our approach is to build rank-and-file groups, uniting communists and non-communist, militant workers. These committees have to fight the union leaders in order to fight the boss -- since the two work together. Thus in the present auto strike our aim is to help workers build rank-and-file committees wherever possible. If this develops widely enough, it could lead to the rank and file auto workers taking over the strike -- the only way for the workers to win anything, since the United Auto Workers misleaders are doing their best to sell the strike out. In general these committees should fight around any and all legitimate workers' grievances -- speed up, low pay, compulsory overtime, *etc*.. A key part of the job of such committees is to fight for working class unity. This means winning whites to support the demands of black workers for preferential hiring and upgrading and against the harassment's and the terrible conditions that black workers are subjected to. It means winning workers to support black rebellions -- which are led by workers and which in every case have been around working class demands. We help build unity between workers in the same industry who are members of different unions. We urge all workers to support strikers. Thus right now, fall 1970, we're actively supporting the Workers' Solidarity Committees which have been organized to back GM strikers. We try to build mutual support between employed and unemployed workers -- for

instance, around fighting layoffs, boosting unemployment insurance and demanding jobs. Similarly, we urge mutual support between organized and unorganized workers. We call on all workers to support working class fights in the communities, fights around schools, housing, jobs, racism and police attacks.

A crucial aspect of working class unity is winning all workers to support welfare clients. A lot of dirt is pushed by the politicians and press about welfare clients. The official story is that they're fat parasites who sponge off workers. A million stories about "welfare Cadillacs" are spread. The rulers hope angry workers will blame welfare clients for increasing inflation and falling real wages.

The truth is the opposite of the ruling class line. Welfare clients are often workers who get crippled by industrial accidents or who cannot find work. Or else, they're working class women with children. Their husbands have left them, as a result of the pressures capitalism puts on all workers, especially the poorest. Far from being rich chiselers, these people get far less than the official poverty level. The so-called flat grants that are being used by the rulers in more and more cities makes things much worse. Clients get even less now than before. Some are close to starvation. ALL workers should support the fight to end this legal murder.

The bosses create the need for welfare. They keep a large part of the working class unemployed, especially black workers. This gives the rulers a poor of reserve labor. It helps them keep all workers' wages down. **THESE RICH RULERS ARE THE REAL PARASITES**.

It is true that welfare comes mainly from workers' taxes. That's because all tax money comes mainly from workers. The rulers see to that. But it is not true that most tax money goes to pay welfare costs. Only a tiny percent of federal taxes (which is of course the vast majority of all tax money) goes to welfare and related programs. The figure is less than 3%. Almost all the rest goes to paying for imperialist wars, subsidizing U.S. businessmen, propping up pro-U.S. regimes, the military exploration of space, and similar anti-working class uses. Unemployed working people deserve far more than the pittance they get on welfare. Even the rotten welfare system was only granted by the rulers because they feared revolution. Workers had to fight hard to get even these crumbs.

The rulers, including smiling "dove" politicians like Massachusetts Gov. Sargent, make constant racist attacks on welfare clients. They want to divert workers from their real enemy: U.S. big businessmen.

We help organize clients to fight back. We work with many other people to expose the vicious slanders spread against unemployed working people.

SECOND, THE HIGH SCHOOLS. In the schools, we try to build unity between students, parents, and honest teachers to fight against rotten conditions, to get cops out of the schools, to fire racist teachers and principals—like James Daly, of Boston English High School. We also oppose "community control" and other schemes that grant sham "control" to provide rulers with a cover for their real power. We want workers to have state power. Until then, why kid ourselves and others? We might as well call things by their real names. The imperialists have power; working people have to fight until that power is smashed. Until then, let the rules keep their committees.

As part of PL’s high school work, we’ve organized a special group, the **CHALLENGE CORPS**. Made up of black and white working class high school students, the CHALLENGE CORPS sells Challenge-Desafio and helps build militant high school struggles, especially against racism.

THIRD, THE ARMY. Some people think of the army as just an imperialist outfit. This view is only half right. It’s true that the U.S. Army is used against working people here (for instance, to break the great 1970 postal strike) and

around the world (not just in Vietnam, but all over). The army brass works for the same big bankers that run everything else. Black and white working people are forced into this army to provide cannon fodder for the billionaires.

But that's only one part of the story. Because the guys who are drafted are the same ones giving the rulers such a hard time in high schools and factories around the country. Many have been active in black rebellions. It's their relatives who got scabbed on by the army during the postal strike. It is their class—the working class—that the army exists to oppose. The reason for all the intimidation in the army is the brass knows no working class GI is going to serve the U.S. rulers unless he's forced.

And even with force, the rulers' plan is working less and less. Thus most GIs oppose the imperialist war in Southeast Asia and the war against workers at home.

GI's fight back many ways.

Some GI fights are spontaneous and individual. Thus the army admits that 500 GIs go Absent Without Leave (AWOL) daily. Last year 57,000 deserted. 23,000 are still at large. Recently this rate has nearly doubled. The army now admits about 300,000 go AWOL yearly.

AWOL and desertion rates are higher for GIs who get orders for Vietnam. Of 9,000 GIs who are supposed to report to Oakland Army Base every month to be shipped to Nam, 400 never show up. Thousands more go AWOL, and another 1500 apply for some kind of congressional action or discharge (figs. From NY Times). In Vietnam. GIs desert at the rate of 300 a month (NY Post). There is a whole section of Cholon, Saigon's sister city, where AWOLs and deserters live, protected by the Vietnamese.

Army brass is having a pretty rough time getting workers to report for induction. In Oakland, Cal., a largely clack working class area. Half of the guys ordered to report never showed up. Of those who did, 11% refused to go.

AWOLs and desertions don't really stop the brass from using their armies as they please. What they lose through desertions they make up on the next draft call. **WHAT REALLY HURTS ARE REBELLIONS INSIDE THE ARMY**. Every military stockade in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Okinawa, Korea, Vietnam and Germany has had at least one major rebellion. The Ford Ord stockade averages one rebellion every three months. Rebels burned down Vietnam's LBJ (Long Binh Jail) and Da Nang Brig and shot their main officers. The population of the stockades rose from 5,000 in 1966 to nearly 20,000 in 1969.

Mutinies by front-line troops have multiplied tremendously. Most of the successful mutinies are never reported because the troops shoot the officers who normally report them. It's gotten so bad the brass have set up ballistics labs to see whether officers and NCOs are being shot by "VC" or GIs. In the 1st Air Cav., seven 1st Sgts. in a row were eliminated. Combat GIs have also conducted raids on officers' clubs.

Recently there were mutinies over the invasion of Cambodia. The GIs said: "We don't even belong in Vietnam; why should we go to Cambodia?" It's also reported that a hundred GIs in the 1st Air Cav. are refusing to go into the field.

The most militant stateside rebellion took place at Fort Hood. Black GIs held mass demonstrations on post refusing any "riot duty" against their working class brothers in Chicago.

A friend of ours who just returned from Pleiku (he was ordered out of Vietnam because the brass was scared of PL) reports that shortly after he arrived, the Commanding Officer call together all the troops. He told them, first, that he knew many of them wanted to kill him. But, he warned. He had a sawed-off shotgun with him at all times, so he'd take as many of the soldiers with him as he could. Secondly, he said, the officers were taking up a collection for a swimming pool for the troops. Awhile later, someone threw a fragmentation bomb in the C.O.s window. The C.O., who was not in bed at the time and so got away with his skin (for the time being) ordered three known militants arrested. The next night, the officers' latrine blew up, with four officers inside.

Once, our friend reports, while he was walking across the base, someone started shooting at him. He ran over right away, shouting for the soldier to stop, it was only a fellow GI. "Oh," said the man, "I'm terribly sorry. I thought you were the officer of the guard!"

In other words there's a real fighting war going on inside the U.S. army, a war between the brass and the working class GIs. PLP members, like the fellow at Pleiku, go into the army. We oppose attempts to escape the draft on a personal basis. In our estimate, the army is an excellent place to serve the workers by building anti-ruling class struggle and support for those the army attacks—like Vietnamese working people. Thus we also go, willingly, to Vietnam—to try, in practice, to build international working class unity.

There has been an excellent response to this fighting line. Over 1,000 GIs at Fort Dix in New Jersey buy Challenge every issue. (It's the best read paper on the fort.) The army has already discharged 3 PLP members—Peter Bilazarian, Heath Paley, and Ralph Spiga—because of the tremendous support our ideas are receiving. The army recently court-martialed Paley and Bilazarian and a friend of PL, Bill Hayes, on charges of assaulting an MP and disrespect for an officer. These charges stemmed from struggle during an earlier court-martial of PL'er Bilazarian for distributing PL literature at the base. As pictures, including one in an earlier section, show, there was a good deal of militancy inside and outside the court-martial room. During the trial, which lasted seven days, 35 to 40 GIs came as "character witnesses'—with a clear knowledge that they were fighting to defend communists and communist ideas. The court-martial was turned around, into a political attack on the imperialist army.

As you can see from the front page of EM-16, one of the GI papers PL members help put out, a key part of the struggle is to link black and white GIs to fight racism. Racism is very sharp. Not only are black GIs given the most dangerous work, but, also, black GIs are attacked and insulted especially sharply by the brass in order to build and play on white GI's racism. (For more on fighting racism in the army see: any issue of Challenge; Sept., 1970 PL magazine, Mack Smith's article, "Smash the Bosses' Armed Forces," or the PL army program, which has the same title. Write for these publications!)

PL fights hard for an internationalist outlook. This has two aspects, two sides. On the one hand, it means winning U.S. GIs to fighting the brass and backing rebels they're sent to attack. On the other hand, it has to be understood: when GIs do in fact carry out the ruler's orders and attack working people—whether they be teamsters in Cleveland or Vietnamese fighters—working people have the absolute right to fight back. We support working people who resist the U.S. imperialist army 100%—while at the same time working to win GIs to **SMASH THE BOSSES' ARMED FORCES!**

Given the tremendous militancy and revolutionary potential, it is a tragedy that Vietnamese leaders do not try to win U.S. soldiers in Vietnam to an internationalist working class line. This was done in the early 60's with the ARVN troops, with great results. But nationalism and the negotiations-mania prevents revisionist leaders from carrying out this task—this absolute duty!

FOURTH, IN THE UNIVERSITIES. In the universities we try to ally with other students, campus workers and

faculty members to build a pro-working class movement. This means helping build Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and other anti-imperialist, anti-racist organizations, which should hopefully include black and white. These organizations fight around questions of racism (especially around the oppression of black campus workers), against imperialism on campus (fights to abolish Reserve Officer Training Programs), and build strike support (thus during the General Motors strike, SDS has closed down a number of dealerships.) In other words, we help to develop a worker-student-faculty alliance.

FIFTH, IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES. There is currently a tremendous upsurge in the 2-year colleges. As opposed to the 4-year schools, nearly all the students in these colleges and working class kids who will get working class jobs after they graduate. The rulers claim that these schools will enable working class kids to "make it." This is nonsense, as the Nov. 1 Challenge discusses (p. 17) In fact, 50% of the students never graduate. Most of the ones who do graduate either can't get jobs they were "trained" for, because they are becoming obsolete, or get jobs—and end up earning what they could have earned without going to community college. While in school, students are often "trained" by doing unpaid work. Allying community college students with workers is really building a worker-worker alliance. One important aspect of our work at these schools is to expose the myth that they help working class kids. In fact these schools are a way of sucking them into some more mis-education, the better to shaft them later on. As at high schools and universities, we help build pro-worker fights against the administrations of those schools.

SIXTH, IN GENERAL, WE FIGHT FOR INTERNATIONALISM. We make this a separate point because it is absolutely critical. International working class unity is the essence of communist politics. (We mentioned earlier that we oppose nationalism. One of the bad aspects of nationalism is that it justifies unity with bourgeois elements—since they're "our own people." But this is not the worst thing. The worst aspect of nationalism is that it leads to opposing workers of other nationalities.) Some of the things we're doing to promote internationalism are:

> Developing close fraternal relations with the Canadian Party of Labor and the Puerto Rican Socialist League, the two revolutionary communist parties in those two countries. This involves, for example, mutual strike support work. Thus PL and CPL issued a joint flier backing U.S.-Canadian auto strikers. Together with CPL and the League. PL sponsored a march of 2500 working people and students through 4 miles of New York City, in support of International Solidarity, and against the Canadian Government which is using anti-worker terrorists to justify a general crackdown on working people and real communists. This march got a terrific response from many thousands of workers. The next day we had an all-day get together of 2000 people, including Speeches, revolutionary communist entertainment, and food. This march and this meeting were a great inspiration to all who attended. They showed that, while our movement is not large yet, it is growing fast and developing close ties among the people.
>
> Supporting strikes and rebellions all over the world.

COMMUNIST WORK STYLE AND IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

As we discussed in an earlier section, our aim in day-to-day struggles is to rely entirely on working people and not liberal rulers and at the same time always to keep the goal of workers' power in the forefront.

While doing this, we work to defeat the ideological influences of the ruling class among the people. That means fighting racism and nationalism, male chauvinism, pacifism and terrorism. We spoke about nationalism earlier. As for racism, it is one of the most vicious ways the rulers try to split working people. It aims both to justify the specially sharp oppression of blacks ("of course they get it the worst—they're animals") and at the same time isolate the most militant—the black workers—from white workers. Male chauvinism, which justifies the rotten conditions foisted on

women workers because "they're not breadwinners and anyway they don't do a man's day's work" also involves oppression of women by men in their off-the-job lives. There is no reason why women should "stay out of politics" because "it's a man's task" despite overwhelming evidence that women often provide the best revolutionary leadership.

What about pacifism and terrorism? Why do we link them, one might ask. Aren't they opposites?

Two sides of the same coin, really. Pacifism is usually considered mainly a question of refusing to use force, or fight back if attacked. That's one aspect of pacifism. But to understand pacifism better, we must consider it as a political approach. As such, it means adopting a stand of moral outrage. The classic pacifist tactic is to inflict damage on oneself—e.g., to commit civil disobedience, and then accept sharp punishment—in the hope that this will shock the conscience of those in power. Politically speaking, this means adopting a posture of complete strategic passivity. The only ones who can fight and defeat imperialism are workers and their allies. By simply appealing to the rulers' "moral sense" the pacifist is leaving it up to the rulers to decide exactly what will be done and when. This, and not mainly the refusal to hit someone, is the main characteristic of pacifism.

Terrorism is very much like pacifism. In fact, it could well be described as hysterical pacifism. The pacifist tells the rulers: "Change things or I'll scream at the top of my lungs, break windows and blow up buildings, thus killing lots of workers." Like the pacifist, the terrorist does not believe in mass revolutionary struggle, but in the self-sacrificing action of a few elite individuals. Indeed, with the terrorist, the pacifist's disregard for most people (except the elite pacifists and the rulers) has become hatred for most people—for working people. Because terrorists have no concept of mass struggle, they do not try to build a base. Hence they attract the most unstable, often crazy, types—the more twisted elitists are, the more open they are to penetration by police agents. (Thus EVERY terrorist group that has been arrested in the U.S. has had a cop as its leader. Time magazine recently reported that a cop had been traveling around upper New York State calling himself "Tommy the SDS regional traveler" and trying to get frustrated radicals to form terrorist groups.) The main aspect of pacifism—that it is passive in the face of the rulers—is far more pronounced among terrorists. For terrorists don't just leave political action up to the rulers. They do more—they serve to turn working people and others against radicals and increase the government's maneuverability.

Two terrorist groups which are in the news a lot these days are the Weathermen and the Quebec Liberation Front (FLQ). The Weathermen—formed out of a small group which walked out of SDS during the summer of 1969—are at present a tiny group composed mainly of police. Their hatred of the people is so intense that these cop/lunatics hailed the much-played-up Tate murders because of the degree to which the senseless violence was involved.

The FLQ is one of the most selfish nationalist groups. Despite left-wing pretensions, these terrorists have nothing but complete contempt for working people. The have done nothing to help Quebec's working class—the hardest hit in Canada. Indeed, the only people who have died in their terrorist actions, besides a government official, are a truck driver and a postman. (The postman died when he opened a booby-trapped mail box!) The FLQ is only interested in getting a few of their members out of jail. Its long-term goal is to get the imperialists to let them manage some industry. They want a bigger share of the booty.

As we said, the alternative to pacifism, terrorism, or any other odd-ball forms of ruling politics—the alternative to all capitalist politics—is to build a working class revolutionary movement. Such a movement, engaging in mass struggle, will seep all these anti-working class forces into the garbage can. That's where they belong.

Another aspect of ideological struggle is defeating bourgeois influences in the area of culture. We can't go into this in real depth here. Suffice it to say that, in our estimate, the rulers are taking a planned, very serious political approach to culture—more than ever before. Ruling class apologists among writers, directors, etc., are under tight corporate

control. Anti-worker, racist, and in general reactionary ideas are pushed in the sweetest-tasting form. Whereas films once pictured black people as inferior, step-n-fetch-it types, now black people are pictured as slick, tough, smart, male-chauvinist cops or elitist black nationalists, in the hopes of poisoning black militants. Similarly, students are depicted as elitist, escape-crazy dope fiend-terrorists—the aim is to turn off working people, and build these rotten attitudes among the very large number of anti-capitalist students. At the same time, workers are pictured (as in the movies "Joe" and "Easy Rider") as racist student-haters who go out and kill a few hippies. The tremendous militancy of workers—black and white too—is "forgotten" in these fairy-tale nightmares. The aim is to get workers to think of students and blacks as their enemies, while convincing students and blacks that white workers are in Nixon's hip pocket. For students and blacks—fake radical escapist and hip-mod-cop culture. For white working people—appeals to "traditional virtues" like racism and radical-hippy-freaks. For both: lies, attempts to divide. Much more has to be done to expose this poison.

BUILD THE PLP!

One of the most significant events this past year has been the tremendous growth of PL as a force among working people. Our paper now reaches 100,000 every 3 weeks. Most are working people. Many, many workers now sell Challenge-Desafio, work with us in all sorts of struggles, study Marxism-Leninism. More and more are joining PL. This is a development of historic significance. It changes the whole ball game.

For as more workers are won to PL the influence of communist ideas will reach out to every nook and cranny.

And this is happening. We could see it happening at International Solidarity Day, the last week in October, 1970. How long has it been since 2500 people—including a huge number of workers—marched through New York shouting communist slogans, carrying communist signs? We are building a serious party, whose members are stable people, whose whole lives are more and more dedicated to serving workers. We are building a working class party.

ALL POWER TO THE WORKING CLASS!

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

Next Section: Appendix 1: The Economics Of Imperialism In Vietnam

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APPENDIX 1

The Economics of Imperialism in Vietnam

> "I am an investment banker by trade, and I speak as an investment banker when I say that today's less developed nations are tomorrow's richest economic and political asset." (Former Treasury Secretary, C. Douglas Dillon, *Department of State Bulletin*, May 6, 1958.)
>
> "In the coming decades. .. American policy regarding raw materials will need to give close attention to the underdeveloped countries ... in Southeast Asia. Our purpose should be to encourage the expansion of low-cost production and to make sure that neither nationalistic policies nor Communist influences deny American industries access on reasonable terms to the basic materials necessary to the continued growth of the American economy." (Percy W. Bidwell, Former Director of Studies, Council on Foreign Relations, in *Foreign Affairs,* October 1958, vol. 137, No.1.)
>
> "Our influence is used wherever it can be and persistently, through our Embassies on a day-to-day basis, in our aid discussions and in direct aid negotiations, to underline the importance of (U.S.) private investment." (Former Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Expropriation of American-Owned Property*, p. 24.)
>
> "Let me use your pages (Wall Street Journal) to make this proposal: A massive invasion of South Vietnam by American industry...In the modest development effort that presently exists, a number of American-sponsored enterprises have been eminently successful." (Guy Francis Stark, chief industrial development advisor for U.S. foreign service in Taiwan and Saigon, *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 11, 1967)
>
> "Vietnam thus does not exist in a geographical vacuum—from it large storehouses of wealth and population can be influenced and undermined." (Henry Cabot Lodge, *Boston Globe*, Feb. 28, 1965.)
>
> * * * * *

Many people are unsure what relationship exists between U.S. economic needs and the Vietnam war, or else they think there is no connection. We say the U.S. attempt to conquer Vietnam is the result of U.S. imperialism's needs for cheap labor and raw materials, for market and investment outlets. Moreover, Vietnam is strategic for preserving the U.S. empire's ability to satisfy those needs in the future.

Let's look at several arguments that are often put forward against this view:

ARGUMENT #1: The U.S. is not economically imperialist. U.S. foreign investment is of no great importance to the system as a whole. Foreign investment doesn't yield much profit for the capitalists—it mainly helps poor countries

develop.

ARGUMENT #2: It's true that the U.S. is economically imperialist—but this mainly affects Canada and western Europe. U.S. rulers have very little economic stake in "poor" countries.

ARGUMENT #3: The U.S. may need—and engage in—economic imperialism all over the world. But this can't by why the U.S. government is fighting in Vietnam—after all, U.S. businessmen don't have big investments in that country.

This appendix presents facts to disprove these arguments. For a more thorough-going theoretical explanation of why imperialism is a necessary stage of capitalism, **see V.I. LENIN, IMPERIALISM: THE HIGHEST STAGE OF CAPITALISM**. Here we'll only sketch how U.S. capitalism has operated around the world since World War II—especially in Asia—and how all this relates to the Vietnam war.

OVERSEAS INVESTMENTS: CRUCIAL TO U.S. CAPITALISM

The U.S. economy is dominated by an immensely powerful part of the population—about 0.5 percent of the total. (1) But these U.S. capitalists don't just operate at home. As a matter of fact, they run the biggest capitalistic empire in history. The British Empire used to be the biggest.

At its peak, the British capitalists had about $13 billion invested around the world. (2) But as of 1968, U.S. capitalists had close to 120 billion dollars in assets and investments abroad—and half of that was direct investments. (3)

U.S. corporations depend on these huge holdings overseas—in fact, they need to have these holdings expand. The biggest U.S companies get about half their profits from outside the U.S. (4) And these profits don't mainly come from exporting products made in domestic factories. Quite the contrary, the more than 3000 foreign subsidiaries of U.S. corporations all together bring in more than twice as much sales-money as all U.S. exports combined. Or here is another striking comparison. When the total value of the export-sales and overseas production of all countries was figured in 1967, the sum was around $250 billion. What was the U.S. share? U.S. exports amounted to $30 billion. But U.S.-owned owned plants operating abroad produced $150 billion! (5) Between 1957 and 1965, the capacity of U.S.-owned plants overseas went up .150 percent while manufacturing capacity within the U.S. only rose just 39 percent in the same period. (6)

Clearly, exploiting foreign workers is crucial for U.S. businessmen.

FIRST IN WESTERN EUROPE, JAPAN, CANADA....

> "Late in the 1940's—and with increasing speed all through the 1950's and up to the present—...in industry after industry, U.S. companies found that their return on investment abroad was frequently much higher than in the U.S. As earnings began to rise, profit margins from domestic operations started to shrink; costs in the U.S. climbed faster than prices, competition stiffened as markets neared their saturation points." (*Business Week,* 4/20/63, p. 70)

After the Second World War, the U.S. businessman's government put about $30 billion (from taxes) into Europe in Marshall Plan and other "aid." This was pictured as a big sacrifice, a noble act. Actually the reasons were not so nice.

This "aid" was key in propping up reactionary governments and holding off revolution. Since their government had made Europe "safe" with all this aid (most of which came from U.S. workers' taxes), U.S. businessmen felt secure in investing $30 billion in the area. When the final tally is taken, the will have raked in about $60 billion in profits. (7) (Pretty good reward for a philanthropist!) The same pattern was repeated in Japan and Canada, only with a lot less "aid."

Revolution was checked. Huge investments—very profitable—were made. And today U.S. capitalism is one of the biggest employers in these countries; and, especially in England, U.S. economic strength is key in making sure that U.S. policies are followed.

In Canada, by 1963, U.S. rulers controlled 60 percent of the manufacturing industry, 74 percent of the petroleum and natural gas industry, 57 percent of mining and smelting and about 90 percent (!) Of the food-canning industry. (8) U.S. businessmen own about 50 percent of all modern British industry. They control 80 percent of Europe's computer business, 90 percent of its micro-circuit industry and 40 percent of its auto industry. (9)

From 1950 to 1962 direct investments abroad by U.S. companies grew from $11.7 billion to $31.1 billion. ($10 billion of that increase was in manufacturing, which grew from $3.8 billion to $31.1 billion. ($10 billion of that increase was in manufacturing, which grew from $3.8 billion to $13.2 billion.) During that same period, $29 billion came back—in earnings, interest payments, management fees, and royalties from these same investments. (10)

These tremendous U.S. investments overseas are reflected in employment figures. Thus, while the domestic production work force grew 4 percent from 1957 to 1966, at the same time, production workers employed by the U.S. overseas increased 88 percent—from 3.2 million to over 6 million workers.

The so-called "developed" areas—Europe, Canada and Japan—were the main targets of U.S. industrial investment for the first 15 years after World War II. But all the while, these countries were developing their own economies to compete with the U.S. all over the world. This was one of the main reasons for the much-increased U.S. expansion into the so-called poor countries.

...AND THEN IN THE "POOR COUNTRIES"

> With so much excess capacity already existing in the U.S. and demand growing so slowly, there is little or no reason to believe that if the $1 billion (yearly industrial outlay) were prevented from leaving the U.S., it would be invested in more domestic capacity. (*Business Week,* 12/3/60)

In the last decade there's been a U.S. investment push into the poor countries that's just as big as the earlier push into Europe, Japan and Canada.

What happened?

FIRST—The U.S. rulers' share in international trade started slipping. Their share of exports of key manufactured goods from major industrial suppliers declined 10 percent between 1954/56 and 1961. (11) The U.S. businessmen's share of markets in poor countries fell from 9 to 24 percent in various places. As we noted earlier, the other "rich" countries were getting back on their feet and beginning to pose a very serious threat. (This was especially true of Japan.)

(text in box on page 53)

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EM-16

A WEAPON FOR GIs IN STRUGGLE

FREE TO ALL GIs AND GI WIVES

ISSUE NUMBER: ONE

25 MARCH 1970

FORT CAMPBELL AND FORT KNOX

This issue includes several articles on racism in the Army. A black GI was beaten so severely in the Frankfurt, Germany, stockade by MPs that he suffered permanent brain damage was not discharged—is being court-martialed for disrespect to an MP officer, as well as assault. Question of racism in the Army and the system as a whole is looked at from several points of view. A Nam vet asks whether Sir Charles is the real enemy. A group of GI wives tell about the bad conditions they face. The facts about Long Binh Jail (LBJ), related by the majority of editors who spent time there. Cartoons which you won't find in the Army Times. Special last minute article on the use of GIs as scabs to break the Mail Strike. Readers will see the difference between EM-16 and FTA, which we feel has outlived its usefulness. Remember, this paper is your personal property—even according to Army regulations, believe it or not. The only way the Army can take it from you is if you let them. If your CO, Security Officer, 62, MI, CID, or other forces of reaction ask you where you got EM-16, tell them "Article 31 all the way, sir." Pass EM-16 on to another after you are done. If you don't know, learn; if you know, teach!

PO Box 363,
Madcliff, Kentucky 40160

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WORKERS AND STUDENTS: FIGHT RACISM!

The U.S. imperialist system has one primary need: to amass maximum profits. Therefore the terrible oppression o black and other non-white workers at home and in Africa, Asia and Latin America is no accident. The imperialist system can't live unless it does these things.

Racism is the political expression of imperialism. As an ideology, racism pictures blacks as lazy, dirty beasts. "They

get what they deserve," is the line. Thus racist ideas "justify" imperialism's best domestic money maker—the supper-profitable exploitation of black workers. Consider these figures.

The average white family income is double the average black family income.

Sixty percent (60%) of all black families earn less than $4,000, while only 28% of all white families earn less than this amount. Add to this the fact that the size of the average black family is larger than the white family.

44% of all housing for black people is classified as sub-standard (slum), while only 13% of all white housing falls into this category. A greater proportion (numerically) of the black population lives in than 44% classified as slum housing than in the remaining 56% classified as standard.

Between 1960-61, black families were forced to spend almost 10% more (proportionately) for food, housing, and clothing than white families. Black people are charged exorbitant rents for slum housing, and they are systematically robbed by corrupt merchants who have a captive market in the ghetto.

(Figure are from PLP pamphlet, *"Don't Be a Sucker*," available at 10 cents a copy from PLPL, 1 Union Square West, NY, NY. 10003.)

This means the rules make $$billions off wage differences between black and white workers. They make $$billions more by denying black working people to social services necessary for survival. The terrible oppression of blacks is money in the bank for the billionaires who run things.

Because they are hit hardest, black workers fight back hardest. They have led many wildcat strikes. And the great black rebellions of the last 7 years are working class revolts. The issues are jobs, filthy living conditions and incredible police attacks aimed at squashing attempts to fight back. Many while workers have followed the militant lead of blacks. A magnificent example is the 1970 nation-wide postal strike. It was started by the workers in a mainly black and Puerto Rican letter carriers local in New York City. White workers have also been involved in some of the black working class rebellions. Thus whites played a role in the New Bedford, Mass. Rebellion of July, 1970. One key reason the rules push racism is to get white workers to reject this militant leadership.

Too often, white working people accept racist theories and practices. This has to be fought all the time. The majority of white workers can and must be won to supporting militant blacks. We ask all white workers to consider these questions:

Do black workers bust strikes? Do they pay low wages? Do they speed-up and automate workers out of jobs. Do they close plants to run away to low wage areas? Do they pass anti-union laws? Do they hire scabs? Do they make young workers fight and die in wars against oppressed people for the sole sake of profits—like in Vietnam? You know what the answers are: we have only one real enemy: the companies and those that represent them in the Government and in our unions.

As long as racism has a strong hold, the rulers can maintain power. They can use racism to reverse any struggle. The working class cannot possibly free itself of imperialist political control unless it smashes this crucial ruling class weapon.

We say let there be no business-as-usual response to racism. We should fight it and fight it hard wherever it rears its

head. Racist attacks should be answered with high school rebellions, wildcat strikes, mass demonstrations. Whenever black rebellions occur like Asbury Park, NJ, or New Bedford, Mass., or earlier rebellions in Detroit or Harlem, they has to be an immediate response. There should be mass demonstrations and mass leafleting supporting the rebels. Struggles should be launched to back these fights.

Fight racist ideas and practices!

An injury to one is an injury to all!

Back black rebels!

* * * * *

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SECOND -- In 1962 the rate of profit on U.S. investments in Europe took a big slide. (12)

THIRD -- Along with these developments, competition was growing sharper in the countries where U.S. businessmen were trying to invest capital and sell goods. (13) John G. McLean, a director of Continental Oil and Anderson, Clayton Co., had this comment:

> manufacturers ... have been forced to establish plants abroad to retain their business ... (U.S.) industries are finding their traditional export markets preempted by the growth of efficient, indigenous producers. The development of local industries abroad has ... made it impossible from a competitive and economical standpoint to continue shipments from this country .... (14)

Thus, to compete with other powerful capitalist countries, the US. ruling class has to rely increasingly on overseas production, more and more using the cheap labor "available" in the "poor" countries. The rulers have also stepped-up milking of foreign (especially "poor" countries') resources.

MILKING "POOR" COUNTRIES' RESOURCES

A government research team wrote (in 1952) that the U.S. was importing 94 percent of the manganese, 100 percent of the chromite, 98 percent of the cobalt, 86 percent of the nickel, 43 percent of the tungsten, 78 percent of the tin, and 85 percent of the aluminum bauxite that it used. U.S. businessmen's "native" country (the U.S.) has about 8 percent of the world's population. Yet the government was already planning, back in '52, to "hold onto" (read: steal!) 50-100 percent of various of the world's mineral resources. (15)

A major part of U.S. policy in the "poor" countries consists in taking those resources. Malaya, Indonesia and Thailand alone have 2/3 of the world's tin reserves. India is a major source of supply for American manganese. When European governments got Marshall Plan "aid" after World War II, they had to agree to (1) give up 5 percent of local currencies for raw materials purchases and (2) open Europe and European colonies to U.S. rulers' investments. In the same way, today, U.S. "aid" programs to the poor countries always require that major resources get handed over to U.S. bosses "in exchange." (16)

"INVESTMENTS": TAKING OVER ECONOMICS OF "POOR" COUNTRIES

Today, the U.S. imperialist economy -- which built itself up through world-wide plunder, starting way back with the highly profitable slave trade -- this pirate-colossus now has at its disposal the vast quantities of capital accumulated (or, more accurately, stolen from workers here and abroad) over the past 2 centuries. Based on this immense economic power, it is moving to take over the "poor" countries' economics completely.

From 1950-1965, the U.S. invested $9 billion in the "poor" countries. $25.6 billion came back to the U.S. rulers in profits. (Much of this profit -- less and less towards the end of this period -- was derived from raw materials and petroleum.) Compare the profits the U.S. ruling class made in the "poor" countries with what it made in so-called "developed" areas. U.S. businessmen invested $14.9 billion in Europe and Canada in this period but made "only" $11.4 in profit. Thus, while direct investments in the "poor" countries were $6 billion less, they yielded $14.2 billion more in profits. Thus the rate of profit is clearly much higher in the "poor" countries. (17)

The first big target (after Europe, Canada and Japan, that is) for U.S. rulers' investment-plunder after World War II was Latin America. Already in 1946 the U.S. held $3 billion in direct investments in Latin America -- according to former Assistant Secretary of State, Spruille Braden in a boastful speech to an executives' club. 76 percent of this was in manufacturing, public utilities, minerals and oil. As time went on, Latin America became even more the apple of the finance-capitalists' eye than Europe. Business Week noted this a few years ago:

> U.S. companies are slowing down the place of their investment build-up in Europe, and shifting more and more attention to Latin America. Surprisingly, the up-turn in investment in Latin America is stronger in manufacturing than in mining, and at least on a par with oil. (*Business Week*, 10/14/67)

This U.S. investment involves, for example, building vast petrochemical and auto plants. At the same time it means taking over all major banking facilities. (Which means that entire economies get taken over, since these major banks control most of those "native" industries that the U.S. businessmen don't directly take over.) U.S. investments move into Latin America at a rate of over 1/2 billion dollars every year. In addition, Latin America provides a $3.5 billion a year market for U.S. exports.

Five years ago, in 1965, the Far East stood where Latin America was in 1946. There was about the same volume of direct investment in manufacturing and oil. Between 1961 and 1969 the number of new establishments and expansionary moves into the two regions (Latin America and the Far East) were the same. Thus in 1968, the market for U.S. goods in 17 Asian countries (excluding Japan) was nearly $3.5 billion -- that is, the same as Latin America. (18)

JOBS FOR "POOR" COUNTRY WORKERS...AT 20 CENTS AN HOUR

We are often told that U.S. companies provide good jobs at high pay for "poor" country workers. This is a bitter joke. A U.S. capitalist buys a pair of hands to work a ten hour day in, for example, his 1000 man Motorola factory in South Korea for pennies a day -- for half of what the U.S. rulers pay in Latin America! (19)

AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS IN MANUFACTURING FOR ASIAN COUNTRIES

Source: **UN Monthly Bulletin of Statistics** and International Labor Organization *Quarterly Bulletins and Yearbook*

BURMA.....22¢, 1966, males only

HONG KONG.....41¢, 1969, skilled construction

INDIA.....13¢, 199

SOUTH KOREA.....13¢, 1969, rising lately due to militant struggle

WEST MALAYSIA.....35¢, 1969

PAKISTAN.....28¢, 1969, skilled construction

PHILIPPINES.....22¢, 1969

SINGAPORE.....35¢, 1969, skilled construction

TAIWAN.....17¢, 1969, includes family allotments and/or bonuses;

rising lately due to labor struggle

THAILAND.....16¢, 1967

SOUTH VIETNAM .....36¢, 1969, skilled construction. As in the U.S.,

skilled construction workers get twice as

much as regular manufacturing workers

Despite increased competition from Japanese capitalists in the Far East, the U.S. is of late becoming economically dominant in inter-imperialist competition in that area. In India, for instance, the U.S. is now the main capital-importer.

WHY WE CALL IT PLUNDER

Let's examine what happens when U.S. bankers and industrialists move in on an entire Far Eastern economy. First of all they destroy what was there and replace it with production for U.S. bosses' interests -- not for the interests of local workers and peasants. Thus if there used to be petty-production of clothing and household items and food production,, this is gradually disintegrated by the inflation that is caused by U.S. rulers' economic presence, or else it's driven out of business by imperialist competition. Take India, for example. The local subsistence economy has been destroyed, and the economy is more and more dependent on the U.S. for food. Very few Indian workers -- in absolute or relative terms -- are employed by the "new industry" imperialism brings in. Many are driven from the land. Huge numbers of Indians have been made landless and unemployed. Their numbers continue to swell. (20) India's growth of per capita output for 1953-1960 was only 1/4 percent per year! (21) This miserable figure is the average for all "poor" countries, from 1955-1965. (22)

Contrary to the "we give them jobs" baloney that apologists for the imperialists dish out -- contrary to these claims, in Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, South Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, etc., unemployment among people who once had jobs or are looking for their first job more than doubled in the first five years of the sixties. In South Korea, the "story book showcase" of U.S. capitalist "goodness" in the East -- there are now close to a million officially unemployed workers. (23) (These official figures are notoriously low -- the real figure is much, much higher.) In Rangoon and Mandalay (Burma) the number of unemployed increased tenfold from 1960 to 1965.

Imperialist investment, which creeps into every nook and cranny and devastates the local economy, leads to widespread unemployment. Then the imperialists' pay-for-hire "intellectuals" turn around and point to the "naturally" high rate of unemployment (in these for-some-strange-reason "poor" countries) as proof they need U.S. investments to supply jobs! It's like Dr. Jack the Ripper claiming that, what with the vast increase in assaults on women, there's a need for more surgeons like himself.

This ever-increasing unemployment is a constant depressant on wage rates in the "poor" countries. The lower the wages, the more the imperialists invest, the worse they wreck the economy, the greater the unemployment; and the greater the unemployment, the lower the wages …

The "purpose" of the land becomes providing exports; the "purpose" of people's existence becomes to consume imports and more important to be cheap workers for imperialist profits. The "purpose" of the entire country is not to feed and clothe itself but to enrich the U.S. ruling class.

Next Section: V. I. Lenin On Imperialism

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V. I. LENIN ON IMPERIALISM

> Without forgetting the conditional and relative value of all definitions in general, which can never embrace all the concatenations of a phenomenon in its complete development, we must give a definition of imperialism that will include the following five of its basic features: (1) the concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life: (2) the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on this basis of this "finance capital," of a financial oligarchy; (3) the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; (4) the formation of international monopoly capitalist combines which share the world among themselves; and (5) the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed.
>
> Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital has established itself; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.
>
> Monopolies, oligarchy, the striving for domination instead of striving for liberty, the exploitation of an increasing number of small or weak nations by a handful of the richest or most powerful nations -- all these have given birth to those distinctive characteristics of imperialism which compel us to define it as parasitic or decaying capitalism. More and more prominently there emerges, as one of the tendencies of imperialism, the creation of the "rentier state," the usurer state, in which the bourgeoisie to an ever increasing degree lives on the proceeds of capital exports and by "clipping coupons." It would be a mistake to believe that this tendency to decay precludes the rapid growth of capitalism. It does not. In the epoch of imperialism, certain branches of industry, certain strata of the bourgeoisie and certain countries betray, to a greater or lesser degree, now one and now another of these tendencies. On the whole, capitalism is growing far more rapidly than before; but this growth is not only becoming more and more uneven in general, its unevenness also manifests itself, in particular, in the decay of the countries which are richest in capital (England). (Lenin, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*)

As the quote from Lenin argues -- and this has been shown to be true by the development of capitalism for 50 years since Lenin wrote his book, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism* -- an important characteristic of modern capitalism is that it must export capital. The capitalists' money can't be profitably enough invested at home. U.S. imperialism is pouring investment money into "poor" countries because it has to find an outlet. This "surplus" of investment money leads to vast unemployment in countries like India. Then the intellectual-whores the imperialists employ to cover their stink turn around and say: "Countries like India are overpopulated. The land can't support all of them. It's their own fault for having so many damned children." You lie, is communism's answer. It is because the capitalists have "too much" money, which they've made by bleeding the people -- this "too much" money is what destroys these "poor" countries -- which makes them poor! -- and that leads to "too many" people. The answer to "too many" people is not to sterilize workers but to kill imperialism.

THE NATIONAL BOURGEOISIE: FRONT MEN FOR IMPERIALISM

Nowadays, imperialism often rules through local despots, front-men willing to sell the people to the highest bidder -- provided they get some crumbs. The "native" bourgeoisie (including the nationalists) is far too weak to "go it alone." Even doing something as ordinary (for capitalists) as getting a loan means they must go to a bank that's been taken over by U.S. banks. In other words, every step of the way the U.S. can squash these guys like fleas. In all the "poor" countries they have become mere adjuncts (politically and economically) to imperialist control, as "managers" fronting for U.S. boards of directors. (For a discussion of how this has developed in India, see PL magazine, September 1970, p. 38, "Indian Economy Imperialist Dominated," by A.K. Mokkherjee, A.K. Sengupta, and M. Chachrbourty.)

In phony "socialist" countries -- like Algeria and Cuba today, or the Ghana of Nkrumah, U.S. or sometimes Soviet, French or other imperialists control the economy as much as in any other colony. Take Nkrumah's Ghana, for instance:

> The usual course for the socialist (sic!) governments has been the kind of tactic adopted in Ghana, where the rate of company tax was stiffened, wage increases of 20 percent were insisted on, plus an increased investment locally of 60 percent of net profits after tax. Since this left the mining companies still with dividend rates of 45 percent, the prospect did not terrify them. The companies now scrupulously steer clear of any direct interference in the national economy, and are rapidly "indigenizing" their staffs. (Note that since they of course control these "staffs," they would not any longer needs open interference.) **But the "colonial" character of the economy remains**. (P. Worsley, *The Third World,* 1964, p. 241, our emphasis).

Elitist bourgeois governments that call themselves socialist but negotiate deals (like the one Worsley describes above) allowing imperialism to stay (just as Cuban leaders have allowed Russia to replace the U.S. in its former position as official Strangler of the Economies) -- these fake-socialists provide no solution. Freedom from imperialist rule can only be achieved when you go all the way, when a mass based workers' and peasants' dictatorship seizes power. This means a dictatorship over the imperialists and domestic bourgeoisie and landlords. It means power and freedom for the vast majority of the people. Only workers' and peasants' rule -- socialism -- can develop the country for real, instead of relying on imperialist capital with all its ruinous effects.

In the openly neo-colonial areas (like Thailand or South Korea) and the neo-colonies with a "socialist" face (Algeria, Cuba) the people are terribly oppressed because the economies have been politically paralyzed so that imperialism can slowly, in its good time, devour their labor and resources.

And the only answer to this can be: **POWER TO THE WORKERS!**

WHY VIETNAM?

> That empire in Southeast Asia is the last major resource area outside the control of any one of the major powers of the globe....I believe that the condition of the Vietnamese people, and the direction in which their future may be going, are at this stage secondary, not primary. (Senator McGee, D-Wyo., in the U.S. Senate, Feb. 17, 1965)

The countries of southeast Asia -- including Vietnam -- are the latest frontier for U.S. investment. There are many ways U.S. businessmen can invest in this area. Corporations can act on their own or in consortiums. For instance, here are some examples of single companies moving in: Westinghouse built a plant making welding-electrodes in Singapore; Texas Instruments, Fairchild, General Electric and Allis Chalmers each built plants in Singapore; Airco-Speer (of Air Reduction) is setting up a 100,000 square foot plants to make resistors starting early in 1970 in Singapore, and ESSO is building a $65 million refinery complex capable of handling 80,000 barrels of Mideast crude oil in Singapore. (Singapore is to become a tool-room and raw materials processing area for other Asian industries that are also owned by U.S. businessmen.) Scott Paper and Kimberly-Clark both build paper mills in Thailand. Electronics and petrochemicals are fast-growing industries in this area.

There are also numerous examples of consortium investments. (A consortium involves more than one company investing together.) Thus this method is being used by the big Koppers firms, from the U.S., in forming a 5-nation consortium that will back an iron-and-steel mill in South Korea. Dow Chemical, Skelly Oil, Allied Chemical and American Synthetic Rubber are entering joint ventures with the South Korean puppet government to set up petrochemical plants as part of a complex of 12 factories to be completed by 1971. (Incidentally, Japan and the U.S. together buy 70 percent of South Korea's exports and are the importers of most of the capital equipment (machinery) used in that neo-colony.

Another consortium is "P.T. Ness Industries-Indonesia" in Jakarta. This capital for this investment was provided by ten U.S. electronics and machinery outfits subscribing somewhere between $30,000 and $60,000 each to provide the initial financing for this project.

Holding an authorized capital of $40 million, the "Private Investment Company for Asia" is another, larger consortium investment. Many key U.S. banks and corporations -- like Caltex, Bank of America, Chase Manhattan, GM, IBM, ITT, Union Carbide, United Fruit, and so on -- have $200,000 subscriptions in PICA.

An older method of penetrating and controlling the development of new industry in this area is through the World Bank and its affiliates -- like the International Development Association (IDA) and International Finance Corporation (IFC) -- all of which are run by top U.S. bosses. World Bank, IFC and IDA mainly make investments in what economists call the "infrastructure" of Asian countries. ("Infrastructure" refers to the inner economic structure of society -- like roads, docks and the rest of the transportation system, water, sewerage and the other necessary public services, electric power, communications, etc., things in other words that any capitalist needs to produce and sell goods, and make a profit. The whole capitalist class needs a well-working infrastructure to keep things going, but many aspects of infrastructure are not very profitable for individual capitalists or banks to run. It's much more profitable for them to lend government organizations money to build these things, and then get a return of such loans for many years.) World Bank, IDA and IFC lower the imperialists' overhead costs by building up the infrastructure of "poor" countries so U.S. imperialists can move around efficiently and milk these countries in a thorough-going way. Either IFC or IDA were behind each of the following infrastructure investments:

In Thailand -- cement and cement sheets, steel rolling mill, concrete pipe, asbestos, highways;

In Malaysia -- electric power

In Taiwan -- railways;

In Singapore -- electric power and electric power distribution systems;

In Indonesia -- cement and highways. (24)

This all adds up to once conclusion: the U.S. ruling class has its eye on Southeast Asia. It isn't willing to lose a single part of it.

Looking at South Vietnam itself, between 1960 and 1965 -- even before the massive U.S. troop invasion took place -- there was $100 million in private investment. Vimytex, owned by H.P. Jen of 30 Church St., New York City, has a textile mill employing 2,000 workers. Johnson and Johnson runs another textile mill. Parsons and Whitemore runs a paper mill. Sugar mill "pioneer" Herbert Fuller promoted a $10 million operation in the coastal city of Tuy Hao:

> "I am in it for the money," Fuller says. "We could get back our investment in two years." Like all entrepreneurs Fuller once again is pushing ahead with his plans because he assumes that the U.S. is now committed to saving South Vietnam. (*Fortune Magazine*, March, 1966.)

Anyway, various U.S. government agencies have probably granted Fuller full insurance against revolution ....

> Businessmen (in Saigon) are predicting more of the same war-oriented U.S.-supported economy for the foreseeable future. And none of the scores of U.S. firms -- from Philco-Ford to IBM -- working on U.S. government contracts in Vietnam has any immediate plans for a phaseout. In fact, some think the reorientation of U.S. assistance toward economic, instead of military, pursuits, might create new opportunities. The outlook is for a stretched-out reduction in U.S. military strength ... commensurate with the progress of Saigon's own military establishment. Without saying so, Hanoi is expected to carry out its own phased withdrawal from the South. One likely ending for this scenario ... is a *de facto* partition of South Vietnam with areas controlled by the Vietcong more or less coexisting with regions administered by Saigon. The confrontation would thus gradually shift from its present military form to an economic and political competition. (*Business International* magazine, a weekly report to managers of worldwide operations, 9/26/69.)

U.S. capitalists are clearly serious about the potential in Vietnam. More evidence on this is provided by the U.S.-government-commissioned study, *The Post-War Development of the Republic of Vietnam*, put together under the leadership of David Lilienthal and Vu Quoc Thuc, which appeared in mid-1969. This $2 million research project was ordered by the government following the 1966 Manila Conference. Lilienthal was then president of the Development and Resources Corporation, an imperialist outfit that "advises governments of poor countries." The study advises southern Vietnam to invite at least $2 1/2 billion in foreign investment between 1969 and 1979. It predicts that, generally speaking, southern Vietnam will become a prime target for a huge variety of capital goods (factory machinery) as well as a market for non-luxury goods. (25)

Thus U.S. businessmen have a long-range perspective on Vietnam. This is typified by M.L. Long, a top manager of Philco-Ford's Vietnam operation. This company is now working on government contracts worth over $32 million a year and employing some 3,000 Vietnamese and south Korean workers. But Long sets his sights firmly on private, non-military business in south Vietnam:

> Given a fairly early end to the Vietnam war and a long-term U.S. economic commitment to Southeast Asia, Long looks forward to getting some $1.7 billion (!)

> in business throughout the area through 1971. (*Business Week*, Sept. 9, 1967.)

Preparing for this "great future" the U.S.-puppet regime in south Vietnam has thoroughly developed its strike-breaking abilities. Thus when power-generating plant workers walked off the job in early 1968, the Saigon police chief broke up a strike meeting, dragooned more than 100 scabs to back up the bosses manning Saigon's seven generating plants, arrested strike leaders and eventually broke the strike. Which is of course the same sort of thing the U.S. bosses' government does at home. (26)

The picture is clear. The Vietnam war is intimately bound up with the urgent economic needs of the U.S. imperialist system. For one thing, Vietnam is itself an important long-term investment area and source of raw materials and markets. Secondly, it is of strategic military-political importance for all of southeast Asia, a very populous area with unsurpassed mineral resources. And indeed, reversing the Vietnamese working people's revolutionary thrust -- through military and political counter-revolutionary efforts -- is vital to U.S. imperialism, which must teach all Asian and other working people: you can't beat imperialism. You can't fight back.

The U.S. government's would-be lesson is a lie. Working people can fight imperialism and -- as long as revolutionary forces rely on the people, and fight through to the end -- the workers can win. This, the real lesson, stands out clearly from the history of People's War in Vietnam.

Working people of all countries -- support each others struggles!

POWER TO THE WORKERS!

* * * * *

THE POOR GET POORER: WONDER WHY?

> Since 1965 the GNP's of Ghana and Indonesia declined 5 percent. There was no increase in India. In Brazil and Kenya there was only a 1 percent increase since 1965. Average prices of raw commodities exported by poor countries have dropped 7 percent in the last decade. (*Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 31, 1968, pp. 1, 21)

THE WORKERS WILL WIN!

Workers' struggles are growing, communism is on the rise in the working class, racism is being more vigorously fought and nationalist paths are being rejected -- indeed, the future is bright!

Perhaps the ruling class can solidify itself in the next couple of years, perhaps it can line up behind some "super" liberal on a white charger, or events may weaken the ruling class even more and push it to the Right. Fascism may come, but the bigger danger is from the liberals. While liberalism still has some ability to delude many people, the economic base of capitalism limits the ability of the ruling class -- liberal or conservative -- to thrown even a few bones to the people. The near future for the ruling class is bleak -- whichever path it pursues.

Workers and oppressed people on the march all over the globe will prove too much for U.S. imperialism. History is on the side of the workers, armed with Marxism-Leninism. The four horsemen of imperialism: anti-communism, revisionism, racism, and nationalism will be destroyed by a united working class. (**PL,** Sept., 1970, editorial.)

FOOTNOTES

1. G. William Domhoff, *Who Rules America?,* Prentice-Hall, 1967, ch. 4; Robert Heilbronner, *The Future as History,* pp. 124-6: C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite,* 1956, p. 122; Gabriel Kolko, *The Roots of American Foreign Policy,* pp. 13-26, 140-142.

2. Jan Pen, *A Primer on International Trade,* Vintage, 1967, p. 83.

3. *Statistical Abstract,* 1967.

4. See *Business International,* issues of 8/4/67, 9/1/67, 10/13/67

5. *Business Abroad* magazine, 9/4/67, "Productivity Abroad vs. the Balance of Payments"; also see H.H. Fowler in Steiner and Cannon, *Multinational Corporate Planning,* New York, 1966, ch. 8.

6. McGraw-Hill, *Markets: Overseas Operations of U.S. Industrial Companies: 1965-67,* p. 6

7. Estimates compiled from Statistical Abstract 1967 and Office of Business Economics, "Foreign Grants and Credits by the U.S. Government"; see Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War,* on U.S. role in post-war Europe.

8. Elliott Haynes, in *International Development Review,* June, 1965, p. 14; also *New York Times,* 2/11/66.

9. *Time* magazine, Dec. 29, 1967, p. 56.

10. Statistical Abstract 1967; J.L. Angel, *Directory of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries,* preface and introduction.

11. "U.S. Share of World Markets for Manufactured Products," U.S. Dept. of Commerce, March, 1964, pp. 2-10; also see *Machinery and Allied Products Institute Statement,* 4/29/60, "Measures to Expand U.S. Exports."

12. First National City Bank (NY), *Monthly Economic Letter,* March, 1967, p. 34.

13. See for instance *Business Abroad,* 2/5/68, on increasing Japanese interest in Taiwan and south Korea. Also *Business Abroad,* 12/25/67, for Dominican Republic, p. 15, and on South Korea, *Wall Street Journal,* 1/24/68, p. 1.

14. Ryans and Baker, *World Marketing: A Multinational Approach,* N.Y., 1967, quote from McLean's "Financing Overseas Expansion," pp. 146-67.

15. Heather Dean, *Scarce Resources,* pub. by Research, Information and Publications Project, Student Union for Peace Action, Canada, May, 1966; on U.S. oil exploration abroad see Michael Tanzer, *The Political Economy of International Oil,* Boston, 1969.

16. See Lansberg, Fishman and Fisher, *Resources in America's Future,* Baltimore, 1963, pp. 430-468 and *Business*

Week 9/18/48, p. 25-26 and 12/16.50, p. 26.

17. Harry Magdoff, "Economic Aspects of U.S. Imperialism," *Monthly Review,* Nov. 1966, p. 39.

18. See *Business International,* 12/5/69

19. See *Business Abroad,* 2/5/68. Also, The National Foreign Trade Convention in late 1967 was reported in *Business Abroad* for 11/13/67; they viewed the Far East and Indonesia in particular as "the world's largest new frontier for international business."

20. See A.G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America,* 1967. Much of this book applies to the Far East as well.

21. J.E. Meade, *The Economic Journal,* vol. 77, no. 306, p. 249.

22. David A. Baldwin, *Economic Development and American Foreign Policy, 1943-62,* Chicago, 1966. Also, Mountjoy, *Industrialization and Underdeveloped Countries,* London, 1966, pp. 155-156.

23. *Business International,* 11/24/67, p. 376. In most poor countries there is a substantial advantage to wage labor if the rulers can get it over the subsistence economy that is being disintegrated; see *International Labour Review,* March, 1966, pp. 281-301, article by Keji Taira. In Latin America the percentage of the working population that are wage-laborers is often twice the average for the Far East. The wages are also twice what Far Eastern wages are; see *Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1966,* International Labour Office, Geneva.

24. See *Business International* for 1968 and 1969.

The Mekong Delta is being surveyed by U.S. teams for a huge power project to provide power in southern Vietnam as well as nearby countries.

25. *Business Abroad,* 6/69, p. 9.

26. *Business Week,* 2/3/68, p. 37.

Next (and last) Section: Appendix 2: More On Revisionism

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APPENDIX 2 : MORE ON REVISIONISM

As we said earlier, revisionism strips communism of its revolutionary working class content, and in doing so corrodes the struggle for reforms, corrupts the class spirit of these struggles, surrounds every reform fight in a hazy, suffocating web of intrigue, of behind-the-scenes "understandings" with "good" imperialists, wheeling and dealing the people's strength in exchange for dubious favors. A revisionist party goes down hill fast.

This has happened before. In the late 19th century and at the start of the 20th, various European socialist parties made tremendous contributions. For the first time a mass socialist movement was built in several countries. This great effort was rooted in the brilliant theoretical work and practical leadership of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels -- and of course, in the heroic struggles of working people throughout the middle and late 19th and early twentieth centuries, battles from which we can still learn a good deal -- like the Paris Commune of 1871 where, for the first time, the working class seized state power, although only for a short time. But by the time World War I broke out, the socialist parties in Europe had become so thoroughly revisionist that they supported "their" (!) governments and urged German workers to kill their French class brothers, etc. But at the same time as this old revolutionary movement was disintegrating, a new movement, led by V.I. Lenin and the Russian Communist Party was coming into existence. The left-wing of the socialist parties broke away and joined this movement. Learning from the great strengths and also the mistakes and betrayals of the old socialist parties, the Russian Bolsheviks were the first revolutionaries to seize -- and hold -- state power.

Thus a new communist movement was born, on a higher level and with deeper roots than the one before. And this new movement for the first time took hold in the vast colonial lands, the European colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as in the "established" "socialist areas" -- Europe and the U.S.

Since World War II, revisionism has once again become dominant in the revolutionary communist movement. This new revisionism is very much related to errors in dealing with nationalism, as well as liberal view of the state (that it can be reformed into a "good guy" and revolution is therefore unnecessary). This is, of course, not a good thing. But at the same time, a new revolutionary communist movement is developing -- including, in the Americas', the Puerto Rican Socialist League, the Canadian Party of Labor and the Progressive Labor Party (in the U.S.). This new movement is still young and small, but it is very much alive, fighting hard and growing. We are trying to learn from the great working class struggles and great revolutionaries that have come before us, while at the same time avoiding the errors that allowed revisionism to become dominant in the past.

How, then, does revisionism develop?

From the time we're born, all of us are bombarded with capitalist ideas, the ruling ideas in all capitalist countries. We are taught nationalism, liberal-reformism, pacifism, fear of change, racist nightmare-lies, scorn for working people. And we are taught that "dog-eats-dog; every man better stick up for himself first and the devil takes the softest so sharpen your teeth and come out swinging. That's life. Who can blame a man for grabbing all he can? You only go around once, don't you?"

These ideas serve as a profound justification for capitalist rule. Unless the working class is basically freed of their influence, it can't win.

But communists don't live in some other world or in a hot-house. They're right out there with everyone else in the capitalist air. We bring all the capitalist garbage into the movement with us. These ideas and practices don't just

disappear either. In fact, unless they're actively fought -- through political struggle and base building to make our outlook one of serving working people -- they will grow within the movement itself. (See PL's pamphlet *Build a Base in the Working Class.*) Manifested at first in small corruptions, fed by ten million influences in the society, reinforced by their unchallenged growth in other reds, these self-serving, anti-worker ideas can take over quietly, without a fuss. External difficulties bring them out sharper, and lack of ties to the people make possible a complete victory for enemy ideas. The ruling class, which is not a bunch of fools, knows this and therefore dangles bribes as well as threats and punishments. "Don't fight us so hard," is the message, "and we'll go easy on you." Given isolation and a growing contempt for the people, the one-time revolutionary begins to "come to terms" with imperialism. He learns to "distinguish between madmen like Goldwater and doves like LBJ." (Believe it or not, this was the fake-radical "Communist" Party USA's line in the 1964 elections!) Liberalism replaces real communist work. Manipulation, opportunism, organizing around anti-worker ideas (like nationalism) and Madison Avenue techniques replace learning from the people and working class struggle. Wheeling and dealing, the one-time reds become the harmless loyal opposition.

But after reds lead a socialist revolution there are even greater revisionist dangers.

For one thing, the new, working-class-run society does not appear full-blown. It steps forth very shaky, experimenting, but still covered head to foot with bourgeois traces. For the habits of servility ("we workers need experts, we're dumb") to pro-ruler ideas like racism and male chauvinism -- many rotten habits and ideas accumulated over thousands of years of class society remain. Millions of small businessmen, professionals, middle officials remain -- people with the outlook of very small capitalists. And of course the rulers themselves and their hangers-on -- army officers, upper managers, pay-for-hire intellectuals, corporate lawyers -- they remain too. And they know how to rule as exploiters. They know all the tricks: how to fool and divide, to lie and cheat and make a profit.

Thus, even after a socialist revolution, the old rulers can rely on rotten ideas plus their own experience and "connections" and skills to organize, foment jealously among the workers, attacks the most militant, and, perhaps even while calling themselves revolutionaries (!) recapture state power.

So it's no easy problem. To make things tougher, the very workings of imperfect socialist society produces new groups of exploiters! How? Because socialist society is not "classless." Some are better educated; city dwellers live better than rural workers; men still oppress women to some extent; technical problems must be solved, yet most workers are not trained to solve them; leaders need special conditions to lead effectively, but this allows them to become petty (and, then, not so petty) exploiters.

So new privileged groups can emerge, and the logic of privilege is to protect and justify itself, to fight for more. There are a million excuses.

A good example of a fight over this question was the "red v. expert" struggle in China that developed before the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution. Revisionists in China maintained that only experts could solve day-to-day problems in the factories; workers didn't know enough, they said. This meant putting real power in the hands of highly trained experts, who usually lived better. It meant teaching workers servility. The left-wingers answered that expertise was not the main thing. The test had to be political. There had to be a left-wing approach. Millions of workers themselves had to take the lead in solving every problem. The working class itself had to exercise leadership in everything!

This left-wing line was raise in a massive way by literally hundreds of millions of students, workers and peasants during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. How will a problem be solved? By relying on what is new and up-coming,

on the workers, on liberating the revolutionary understanding and vast reservoir of information possessed by millions of workers and peasants -- while, at the same time, abolishing privilege. or would the approach be to do things the "easy" way, rely on an "efficient method" -- i.e., call in a few smart-guy experts, keep delicate problems out of the rough hands of the people, and reward the all-important elite with more and more privileges, increasing instead of narrowing the gap.

That was the question.

It takes different forms, but that is in some sense always the essential question: a left-wing, mass-based revolutionary pro-worker approach? Or a rightist, fundamentally pro-capitalist, revisionist approach?

What is the guarantee against revisionism? There are no easy answers or quick cures. The key is to develop firm, revolutionary roots among the vast masses of workers. They must grasp communist ideas as their own property. The masses, steeled in struggles they must wage and having grasped red ideas -- they are the best guarantee against revisionism. Second, the fight against revisionism must be open and sharp. It must be fought tooth-and-nail and above all in a mass way -- we mean that literally, the masses themselves must take part, must become the flesh and blood of the struggle. In that way, revisionism cannot reverse the revolutionary struggle.

Let us return to the Vietnamese leaders. We can detect the tremendous hold of revisionism several ways.

FIRST -- The clearest evidence of the strength of revisionism is that, as we have seen, revisionist theory and practice is pushed hard by the Vietnamese leaders. They have dropped revolutionary socialist goals while pushing nationalism, all-class-unity, peaceful coexistence with the same imperialists who are attacking working people everywhere, including invasions in various parts of Southeast Asia, and praising U.S. "dove" politicians. That's pretty revisionist. They have pursued a negotiations strategy that has -- for the time being -- reversed People's War. They are squandering the people, dropping once non-negotiable demands (like the demand for immediate and unconditional U.S. withdrawal) and proposing that post-war south Vietnam be capitalist -- after all the fighting!

SECOND -- Beside pushing this revisionist stuff in Vietnam, the Vietnamese leaders also support revisionist forces around the world. Thus we've seen how they laud the Russian super-revisionist skunks. They also support the U.S. "Communist" Party -- which is (or would like to be) completely allied with the "dove" imperialists like Lindsay and Kennedy. They say you can tell a man -- and it goes for governments too -- by the company he keeps. The Vietnamese "red" leaders don't only keep company with the worst scum -- constantly playing host to U.S. revisionists, for instance. They go even further -- they praise these traitors to the skies. They even backed the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia. (So did Cuba, by the way.)

THIRD -- After saying this much, it may seem like an anti-climax to say that another indication that revisionism holds power in the Vietnamese movement is that the leaders make no effort to fight revisionism. But this is really an important point. Since it is inevitable that revisionism will develop and since revisionism will win unless it is fought very sharply and in a mass way, and since no such struggle is being waged by Vietnamese leaders (obviously -- indeed they praise revisionists all over!) -- this fact in itself -- even without making the first two points which of course provide rock-solid evidence -- this lack of a fight against revisionism itself shows that revisionism has the upper hand.

This is not a pretty picture. Concretely, it means that imperialism will live a little longer, and workers' lives will be that much harder. For revolutionaries and others interested in fighting back against this system, it is crucial to turn this setback around. We can do this by learning the two great lessons of Vietnam: 1) that when it is seriously pursued,

People's War is absolutely unbeatable, that a People's War is one small country can bring about a years-long world upsurge is revolutionary struggle, and 2) that no matter how great and heroic the struggle may have been, rotten politics can turn it around.

The sellout will not be permanent in Vietnam. There is a real left-wing in that embattled land; it can be found among the rank and file communists and NLF members. It is there, more or less developed, as a vast resource among the millions of working people. The contradictions are very sharp in Vietnam and the sellout is gross. The right-wing, the revisionists, are in full control of the "communist" organizations and the NLF. But that only means it will become very clear who caused the sellout.

No amount of imperialist forces has been able to crush the Vietnamese. Revisionism is a tougher enemy. Vietnamese workers and peasants will beat this one too!

SUPPORT THE VIETNAMESE -- DRIVE U.S. IMPERIALISM OUT OF VIETNAM!

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